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General Assembly

Seventieth session

Official Records

6th plenary meeting

Friday, 25 September 2015, 6 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lykketoft .... (Denmark)

In the absence of the co-Chair, Mr. Al-Khalifa (Bahrain), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 5.45 p.m.

High-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly

Agenda items 15 and 116 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Vice-President of the Republic of Botswana.

Mr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, Vice-President of the Republic of Botswana, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Masisi (Botswana): It is a distinct honour and privilege for me to address the General Assembly on behalf of the President of the Republic of Botswana, His Excellency Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama. At the outset, allow me to extend Botswana's warmest felicitations to the co-Chairs on their well-deserved appointment and for the very able manner in which they continue to guide our deliberations. In the same breath, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to join in expressing our deep appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of the Republic of Kenya and Ireland for the diplomatic dexterity with which they skilfully navigated the intergovernmental negotiation process of the post-2015 development agenda.

Today we are witnessing history repeating itself. We have come full circle. In the year 2000, we gathered here for the Millennium Summit, which culminated in the adoption of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), whose implementation deadline is this year. Fifteen years later, we have once again converged in New York to adopt a new pro-poor, gender-sensitive, transformative and inclusive global post-2015 development agenda (resolution 70/1), which is to guide sustainable development efforts over the next 15 years, under the theme "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". This is yet another significant milestone in our pursuit of sustainable development and a just, equitable, prosperous and peaceful global order.

We note with profound appreciation and satisfaction that the post-2015 development agenda is to be underpinned by a set of 17 comprehensive, time-bound Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which seek to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth and job creation, eradicate poverty, empower people, promote shared prosperity and protect human dignity and planet Earth.

We furthermore note that the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the 169 targets of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda are inherently imbued

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with the potential to significantly and irrevocably alter the course of human development, charting a new era of sustained prosperity for all. Botswana is therefore proud to be part of this epoch-making event.

The significance of this historic moment is unparalleled in its aspirations for a better world, but will remain a meaningless enterprise without the very vital political will at both national and international levels. It is therefore imperative that the international community make every effort to garner the necessary political will and resources to ensure the successful implementation of this new universal sustainable development framework, which promises a life of dignity for all.

Rightfully so, the aspirations and expectations of the people we represent for a better quality of life are very high. It is therefore our moral duty and responsibility to leave no stone unturned in our endeavours to live up to their legitimate expectations.

At this juncture, permit me to seize the opportunity to reaffirm Botswana's commitment to the post-2015 development agenda and to its effective implementation. In broad terms, the agenda resonates with Botswana's national development agenda as enshrined in the National Development Plan 11, National Vision 2030 and the Excellence Strategy for Economic Diversification, as well as with many values that my country espouses. We believe that inclusive governance, democracy and respect for human rights and the rule of law should form the fundament and bedrock of our sustainable development efforts.

We continue to be inspired by our steadfast commitment to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family it proclaims. We are therefore firm in our conviction of the need to end abject poverty and hunger, to remove systemic barriers to development, including inequalities and discrimination, the lack of decent jobs, inadequate access to social services and economic opportunities. We fully recognize the need to ensure the sustainability of consumption and production patterns as part of the broader strategies for climate change mitigation in order to heal our planet and secure the home for both present and future generations. This, we believe, is not an option, but a compelling moral obligation that every responsible member of the international community must uphold.

We need to constantly remind ourselves that we are not here to bury the MDGs, but instead to effectively leverage the springboard they provide. While the MDGs have not been fully realized and the progress achieved has been largely uneven within and across nations, they have succeeded in significantly reducing extreme poverty worldwide, closing inequality gaps and increasing access to economic opportunities and social services. They have truly made a profound difference in people's lives.

In my own country, the progress has been very encouraging. We have reached universal access to education and almost closed the disparity between girls and boys in schools. Health services are practically free and have been brought within an 8-kilometre radius of each community across the country. HIV antiretroviral drugs are provided at no cost for all in Botswana who need them, and transmission of the virus from mother to child is almost at zero. Focused interventions for youth employment and income-generating opportunities have resulted in the improved quality of life of our citizens.

One notable area of success worthy of special mention has been the national flagship programme aimed at the eradication of abject poverty. Through the deliberate actions of that strategy, evidence is beginning to show that steady progress is being made. Interestingly, evidence also shows that women are the greater beneficiaries of the programme and achieve significantly higher and better results that actually transform their livelihoods and that of their families. That has been a patent reminder of the role that women can play in national development when given the opportunity. In that connection, the Botswana Government continues to be firmly committed to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them.

Despite the notable achievements of the MDGs, serious challenges exist impeding efforts to close the gaps and disparities that still remain. It will take the concerted efforts of national Governments and close cooperation and collaboration on the part of the international community, civil society, the private sector and all the relevant stakeholders to complete the job left undone during the lifespan of the MDGs and to realize the targets of the SDGs by 2030.

The means for implementing the SDGs are a crucial element for success. In that regard, Botswana heartily welcomes the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted in July of this year during the third International Conference on Financing for Development. The robust financing mechanisms for the SDGs must mobilize international action around very specific initiatives that have the potential to generate positive results.

Beyond financial support, technological cooperation that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies will also be critical. Follow-up and review will be necessary and should be universal in scope, while taking into account national circumstances, as well as the needs and priorities of individual countries. Botswana therefore calls on development partners to assume their role in supporting efforts by developing countries to implement the SDGs.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes only to reiterate its absolute commitment to "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". We further pledge to remain actively engaged in galvanizing international efforts towards the future we want, as envisaged in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development of 2012. It is our belief that such efforts can and should deliver a future that leaves no one behind.

We look forward to a day when every member of the human race, in every part of the world, will be able to realize his or her fullest potential and prosper on a planet that is peaceful, safe and secure.

The Acting President: I thank the Vice-President of the Republic of Botswana for his statement.

Mr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, Vice-President of the Republic of Botswana, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Vice-President of the Republic of Guatemala.

Mr. Juan Alfonso Fuentes Soria, Vice-President of the Republic of Guatemala, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Fuentes Soria (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I come from a latitude with sun and mountains. Guatemala is our home. It is a shimmering mosaic of 24 languages. I am the spokesperson for the President of the Republic, who represents the unity of the nation of nations, which, since mid-April and over the course of 20 consecutive weeks, has served as an example for the world. In a massive and peaceful manner the people of Guatemala took to the streets to express their outrage at the inability of an economic, social and political system that has not made it possible to overcome poverty and segregation of all kinds.

The discovery of networks of corruption that went beyond the limits of the public administration and caused unease in the political culture did not result in acts of violence. On the contrary, it was transformed into a profound feeling of solidarity and unity that forced the resignation and prosecution of the leading authorities of our country. Citizen discontent has not gone away, but it has also not degenerated into scepticism. Citizen participation in the elections of 6 September surpassed historical records and marked the highest turnout in a general election since the return to democracy 30 years ago. In our new democratic spring, not only did abstentionism decline, but corruption declined as well. The citizens turned a deaf ear to the siren songs that called for an interruption in the elections, which will culminate in a vote on 25 October when the new President and Vice-President of the Republic will be elected.

In Guatemala, we took a first step towards the eradication of poverty with a change of focus. To this Summit, convened to adopt a new Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), we bring the experience of the awakening of our citizenry, which clamours for change, beginning with that of overcoming the poverty of our citizens. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, we must begin by recognizing that the poor are not the only ones who suffer from the inadequate distribution of income and wealth, as His Holiness Pope Francis so poignantly recalled this morning (see A/70/PV.3). First, conditions preventing people's full participation in economic, political and social life must be overcome. The poor are those who do not have the material or non-material resources to meet the demands and social mores that characterize all citizens. The poor are the object of statements, analysis and compassion, but they are not able to be the subjects of their own lives and destinies. Poverty cannot be eradicated if it is still considered an obstacle to the building of citizenship. The problem in Latin America — the region of the world with the greatest inequality in terms of wealth and income — is poverty caused by an absence of justice.

The strength, independence and effectiveness of the justice system is the foundation for economic and political freedoms. In our country, the greatest discrimination suffered by the majority of the population living in poverty and those neglected in various ways, that is, the invisible Guatemala, is that they cannot find justice when they appeal to it.

Mario Vargas Llosa noted that the greatness of Great Britain in the nineteenth century lay not in its industrialists, adventurers or military officers, but in those dark judges, with their heads covered by ridiculous wigs, who, through their actions, were teaching the entire population that the law was the same for rich and poor, and that a modest court could punish the powerful neither more nor less than the powerless and could also redress large and small injustices.

Equality before the law is what has characterized the democratic spring we are now experiencing. The Office of the Public Prosecutor, with the support of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala, established in 2006 by an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of our country, has identified, investigated and worked to dismantle criminal networks that have affected the fundamental rights of the population. The current President of Guatemala, as a constitutional judge, is one of the signatories of the decision that approved the International Commission against Impunity.

Justice for women in particular is necessary in order to meet the Millennium Development Goal of promoting gender equality and empowering women. Very few women participate in decision-making in Government agencies. That inferiority is absurd when we consider that justice is represented by a feminine image. We call for addressing the struggle of women for their rights and interests so as to create a new era in which men and women share the responsibility for leadership and peace.

We express our solidarity with the migrants suffering a humanitarian tragedy in various parts of the world, including along the borders of Europe, and with the Central American migration, particularly the migration of unaccompanied migrant children. The Guatemalan identity has been determined by the volume of migration and the status of exiles. Both exile and migration have their roots in despair, but do not lead to the same hopes. Migrants do not renounce the possibility of return. Exiles, however, hastily abandon their homeland to save their lives and cannot return until the circumstances that led to their agonizing departure change.

The invisible Guatemala, made up of indigenous people and peasants who have been marginalized by the system, has not been satisfied with the resigned approach taken by their leaders; it has flooded the streets to warn that the amendment of a few laws is not enough. They demand reforms of the State for a profound transformation of the economic, social and political system that would allow them to overcome poverty, exclusion and racism, thereby developing a true concept of national and international solidarity, an essential element of peace and security.

The President of the Republic of Guatemala has echoed the complaint of the citizens and, to that end, he will, in the Council of Ministers, put forward to the Congress of the Republic legislative initiatives that reflect the demands for reform and the healing of the political system as a first step in reorganizing the State.

This Summit brings us together to finalize an ambitious programme to eradicate poverty, promote prosperity and the well-being of people and protect the environment. There is a relevant reference to such aspirations in the *Popul Vuh*, the Magna Carta of the Guatemalan soul, with its pure form of the Guatemalan morning call:

> "Let all rise up. Call everyone. Let no one stay behind. Not one or two among us, but all of us as one."

The Acting President: I thank the Vice-President of the Republic of Guatemala for his statement.

Mr. Juan Alfonso Fuentes Soria, Vice-President of the Republic of Guatemala, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania.

Mr. Edi Rama, Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Rama (Albania): Despite all the progress and growth achieved, the world is still home to unbearable poverty, to people who continue to lack basic needs and vital services, which is unacceptable, and to various insecurities and multiple challenges. This new, bold, ambitious and transformative global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) demonstrates our commitment to lift people from exclusion to inclusion, from poverty to the path of prosperity and from insecurity to predictability and solutions, and to move from a simple collaboration to global partnership. It is the pact of a generation turning towards its future in a world that moves forward at a faster pace. It is a new global deal with a solemn promise that no one should be left behind. In the common goal of coherent, inclusive and collaborative action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals within the next 15 years, we are committing to a life of dignity for all.

The new Agenda is universally applicable, and it concerns all of us, all countries, with all our differences and distinct national realities. It certainly concerns my country, Albania. Let me briefly explain what sustainability means to us for the present and the coming years. It means reinforcing the rule of law, strengthening our society's democratic values and deepening our broad-based social harmony. Those are the foundations of our development path and the guarantees of our social cohesion.

Social cohesion, religion, coexistence and cooperation are some of the main assets of Albanians, wherever they live, not only in Albania. In his visit to Albania — his very first visit in Europe — Pope Francis stated that Albanians' interreligious harmony was an inspiring example for the world, showing that Christian/Muslim coexistence is not only possible but beneficial for our country's development and that Albania is a unique country where peaceful coexistence and collaboration exist among Muslims, Catholics, Orthodox Christians and people of no faith at all.

Albania has been, still is and will remain an example of coexistence, as it is based on a real, untouchable part of history. We have gone through a long and painful transition, which has brought about profound change, but has also unveiled disparities. We need to further refine an inclusive domestic economic agenda, based on continued growth, while being respectful of the environment. We need increased employment in general and the integration of youth in the labour markets in particular, as well as the inclusion of persons with disabilities. In addition, all that which contributes to development and the empowerment of women and girls are key elements.

The provision of high-quality education and free, high-quality health care for all, which are already two main priority areas of our development agenda, will keep us very busy in the years ahead. They will be crucial components on our road to sustainability. At present, we are embarking on a transformative judicial reform, a vital process that will bring the State and the citizens closer, give justice its true meaning and deeply and positively impact the way the country will move ahead in the coming years.

Like other countries, we have embarked on the irreversible process of European integration, which, to put it simply, includes and affects everything we do. Energy security, water management, waste and sanitation, rural development, territorial management and urbanization, just to mention a few key areas of sustainability, are all part of it.

Albania is evolving within a region, the Balkans, that is still struggling to find its proper place in a united Europe. Yet while qualifying for European Union membership, we are doing everything we can through concrete initiatives to bring all the countries of the Western Balkans closer and to increase cooperation in every field. It is common knowledge that the more we cooperate with each other, the more we share, the more connected we become, the more we know and accept each other, the better our chances will be of living and working together in peace and harmony. Cooperation is of course key to sustainability.

Presenting a vision of the 15 years ahead in a few minutes is an almost impossible mission, but I think that what really counts is not what and how much we say here, but what and how much we do in our respective countries and regions.

Let me therefore conclude by highlighting that the post-2015 development agenda, embodied in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, represents a remarkable success on the part of multilateral diplomacy based on a bold sense of collective responsibility. The same spirit should lead us to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris this December. A long-overdue agreement there will give our commitments here true meaning, the missing component without which the Agenda will not be complete, and will provide a much-needed tool for the protection of our planet, our life and our future.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania for his statement.

Mr. Edi Rama, Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway.

Ms. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, was escorted to the rostrum.

Ms. Solberg (Norway): We are meeting today at a time of great hope, but also grave crisis. We have hope when we see the success of the Millennium Development Goals: 1 billion people have come out of extreme poverty; maternal mortality rates have been halved; millions of people have been saved by vaccine partnerships. We have hope when we look at the historic 2030 Agenda (resolution 70/1) we have agreed on today, which aims to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, to conserve oceans and ecosystems, to leave nobody behind. We have hope for the most vulnerable people, for the United Nations and for our common future on this planet.

Yet at the same time, a global humanitarian crisis is unfolding. Sixty million people are now refugees or displaced. They are fleeing conflict, poverty and poor governance. The war in Syria has forced 12 million people from their homes. Others are fleeing economic hardship and fragile States. We need to spread good governance and the rule of law to the most vulnerable people and societies. Business as usual will not lead to real sustainable development.

Let us follow up the Secretary-General's call for human dignity, first, by scaling up humanitarian assistance to save lives and meet urgent needs, including in protracted crises. This is an investment in resilience and in human development. The United Nations appeals for the Syrian crisis are severely underfunded. We have to do more. This is why we have offered to host an international donor conference for Syria and we have doubled our humanitarian aid to the Syrian crisis. We call on all nations to be generous, so that we prevent a lost generation.

Secondly, we must invest in education and health. Almost 60 million children are still not in primary school. Another 60 million do not attend secondary school.

Gender equality and women's rights must be a top priority for all. When girls attend secondary school, this brings about huge health benefits, not just for the girls themselves, but for their children, families and local communities. This is why Norway will double its assistance to education.

Globally, millions of children need good nutrition and education. We can build on the successful partnerships in global health. The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization and the Global Fund are excellent examples. Education and health are the keys to inclusive growth and job creation.

Thirdly, we must invest in stability and resilience in fragile societies. Without peace and stability, there will be no sustainable development. Goal 16, on stable institutions, rights and freedoms, the rule of law and justice, is an important innovation in the 2030 Agenda. These are all key elements of good economics and democratic governance.

We must also step up efforts to find political solutions to conflicts. Norway will continue its support for peace and reconciliation in the Middle East, Colombia, South-East Asia and Africa.

Fourthly, we must protect ecosystems and prevent climate change. Through close regional cooperation, we have secured sustainable management of common fish stocks in the North. Now we support developing countries in the important mapping of their marine resources. We will continue to work with Brazil, Indonesia, Liberia, Colombia and Peru to protect forests and biodiversity.

Our goals are universal. They apply to all countries and all people. More than ever, the responsibility rests with all Governments to promote business investments and job creation, to create greener and more inclusive economic growth. Official development assistance remains important. Norway will continue to give one per cent of gross national income as development assistance. But poverty reduction depends primarily on domestic resources and economic growth in partnership with the private sector. We cannot solve this problem without achieving more equal distribution of wealth. National Governments must take ownership. We will use aid as a catalyst to raise revenues and fight poverty. Norway will do its utmost, both at home and abroad. We can end extreme poverty and save the planet. If we work together in partnerships and through multilateral cooperation.

Let us build on the positive momentum from this Summit as we prepare for the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Paris.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway for her statement.

Ms. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Adrian Hasler, Prime Minister of the Principality of Liechtenstein, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Hasler (Liechtenstein): This is a proud moment for the United Nations. By adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) we are crossing the threshold to a new era of international collaboration. We are promising nothing less than a better life for future generations, and we have reason to be optimistic that we can keep this promise.

We have come a long way. With the 2030 Agenda, we are building on the success of the Millennium Development Goals, but we have also learned from their weaknesses and designed a blueprint for the future.

The new Agenda fully recognizes that sustainable development can be achieved only by tackling all of its three dimensions: the economic, social and environmental. We are finally connecting the dots. We will not be able to increase prosperity if we fail to preserve our planet. Our investment in our people will not yield any return if we fail to invest equally in women and men, girls and boys. And we will achieve our goals only if we truly commit to the rule of law and to a new global partnership.

The Goals and targets apply to all States equally. Today every Member State is publicly committing to creating an environment that will help mobilize domestic resources and private investments for sustainable development. This is a challenging task — one that will help us overcome outdated categories, such as those of developed and developing countries and donors and recipients.

The Agenda is the result of a fully inclusive process. Member States worked alongside civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders. This may not have resulted in the shortest document possible, but it has resulted in an Agenda for all people.

Liechtenstein is well-prepared. We have made great efforts towards ensuring sustainable development in recent years. Liechtenstein reached, and even exceeded, the official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent in 2012. My Government will continue its commitment to the internationally agreed development targets. I hope that other countries will also do their best to meet the 0.7 per cent target.

We focus in particular on long-term development. For example, our support goes to projects on including women in peace processes, on demining farmland and on promoting good governance and the rule of law.

Liechtenstein is home to a financial centre that fully complies with international standards. It is no haven for illicit financial flows. We have an effective system in place to prevent and detect the transfer of proceeds of corruption and to freeze and return such assets. Our authorities continue to share their expertise with the relevant international programmes. We also support international cooperation in tax matters, based on the principle of a level playing field. Most important, Liechtenstein has committed to the early adoption of the new global standard on the automatic exchange of information.

Liechtenstein has also been at the forefront of global efforts to protect the planet. We have committed to reducing carbon emissions to 40 per cent of our 1990 level. We are on the right track. Since 1990, our population has grown by 25 per cent and our gross domestic product by 140 per cent. Yet our emissions today are already lower than they were 16 years ago.

The goals and targets we have set for ourselves are highly ambitious. Monitoring their implementation is therefore key to their success. The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will be the centrepiece of this effort at the global level. It will allow us to recognize problems, learn from one another and exchange best practices, with all stakeholders at the table.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the successful third International Conference on Financing for Development are also proof that multilateralism remains alive and functioning. This should give us hope that we can succeed a third time when we gather in Paris to agree on a new climate change agreement. Let us seize that opportunity for the sake of our peoples and our planet.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of the Principality of Liechtenstein for his statement.

Mr. Adrian Hasler, Prime Minister of the Principality of Liechtenstein, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Corporate Governance of Antigua and Barbuda.

Mr. Gaston Alphonso Browne, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Corporate Governance of Antigua and Barbuda, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Browne (Antigua and Barbuda): We as leaders are gathered here with one mission and a singular hope for the transformation of our world by 2030. We are a community of nations, a brotherhood and sisterhood. It is therefore important for us to understand and respect differing views, outlooks and objectives among ourselves. At this Summit, in the name of the nations we represent, we have adopted a grand statement with pledges and promises (resolution 70/1), and with the usual phrases: "we pledge that no one will be left behind" and "we commit ourselves to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030".

Previous declarations have failed to deliver on a number of their promises, including the Millennium Declaration, which announced the Millennium Development Goals, which remain partly unaccomplished today. Antigua and Barbuda calls on the international community to commit to the post-2015 development agenda and to its Sustainable Development Goals as a guide to eradicating poverty. Inequality within and among countries is still unjustifiable, while the majority of the world's poorest live in middle-income countries.

I appeal to developed countries to continue to hold true to past commitments, including fulfilling their official development assistance mandates. North-South cooperation remains the core of this partnership, and strengthened commitment from developed countries is therefore required to enhance international cooperation and scale up support for developing countries. South-South cooperation from developing countries that are in a position to offer assistance should not be seen as a replacement of commitments by developed countries, but instead as complementary to achieving sustained development.

More frequent and intense natural disasters arising from the climate change that some countries unconscionably deny continue to devastate small countries in the Caribbean and the Pacific. The post-2015 development agenda must address issues of climate change and environmental sustainability. We call for the strengthening of global partnerships in our efforts to build resilience in order to be able to absorb internal and external shocks and increase economic viability, including the right to development and to achieve sustained development.

The economic and social development initiatives of small countries, particularly in financial services, are crippled by the unilateral actions of big countries and their institutions. Unfair and uneven trade and investment pacts are imposed upon developing countries with little regard to the crude disadvantages that they inflict. And extraterritorial laws are enforced by economic pressures that developing countries cannot withstand.

Yet international laws are being ignored when it comes to powerful countries fulfilling their obligations to weak ones. In the Declaration contained in the resolution we have adopted,

> "States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries" (*resolution 70/1, para. 30*).

But we do no more than urge States to refrain from unilateral economic, financial or trade measures; we do not prohibit them, nor do we condemn those who do apply such unilateral measures.

In that respect, the Declaration acknowledges that our countries still exist in a world of disparities, defined by power. Despite all the grand statements and declarations that are made, we remain a world divided between rich and poor, between powerful and weak, where might is right. That is our sad reality.

We make a number of affirmations in the Declaration. Among them are the recognition that each country has the primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that every State has, and shall freely exercise, full permanent sovereignty over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activity.

At this Summit, we proclaim 17 Sustainable Development Goals with 169 targets. We also announce that the new Goals and targets will come into effect on 1 January 2016. But we must remind ourselves that announcing those Goals and targets is not the same as achieving them. Therefore, while we should take some comfort from the fact that we were able to agree on them, celebration should await the delivery of results.

Our nations have yet to recognize the global society in which we live, our planetary civilization, our interdependence and the duty of care that we countries have to one another. If we are to stop small islands from disappearing because of climate change, if we are to stop the steady flow of refugees resulting from poor economic conditions, and if we are to stop the spread of disease that occurs in conditions of poverty, we must be truly committed to what we say.

The Assembly will forgive me for taking a practical and realistic view of our meeting today. I am glad that we are holding this Summit. I am glad for the Declaration that we are jointly issuing, if only because it is a measure of the pledges and resolutions of all of us, to which each of us can be held. It is the mirror in which we will see our faces in 2030.

We must not just say what we will do; we must do what we say. We should recommit to broadening and strengthening the voice and participation of developing countries — including African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States (SIDS) and middle-income countries — in international economic decision-making, norm-setting and global economic governance.

Small island developing States recognize the enormity of this moment and the new era that we are approaching. We ask the world to prioritize us because of our unique geographical characteristics. We have no ability to change our categorization as SIDS. We can neither graduate nor upgrade nor be elevated from being SIDS.

Our challenges are unique; we ask that we not be marginalized for those characteristics that make us unique. Do not marginalize us because we are fragile, do not marginalize us because we are vulnerable, and do not marginalize us because we are small; instead, prioritize us for those very reasons.

In closing, I would like this Summit to be remembered as a defining moment in human history. I would like it to be the Summit whose outcome was not just another declaration; not just another statement of goals and targets, but one that actually led to positive results. The judgement as to whether it is such a defining moment will have to be postponed until 2030, the date we have set to meet the Goals and targets.

I hope that in 15 years' time, our peoples will not judge us harshly. Let us therefore create a new post-2015 global development architecture that will be truly inclusive, democratic and, certainly, egalitarian. A post-2015 world should be a world in which there is mutual respect and understanding, a world of collaboration and commitment and of equality of opportunity and justice, so that the little boys and girls of Antigua and Barbuda can have the same opportunities as little boys and little girls in the developed world, a world where the voice of Antigua and Barbuda can be a unified voice of the world, a world where Antigua and Barbuda's economy is allowed to flourish just like those in the developed world, a world where all Antiguans and Barbudans and our global brothers and sisters share the same opportunities, because we as leaders took a stand and ensured that all peoples are prosperous and happy with the new transformative post-2015 world.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda for his statement.

Gaston Alphonso Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia.

Mr. Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Cerar (Slovenia): The new Agenda is the most comprehensive development action plan so far. It is global and universal. It is visionary. It is concrete. It is people- and planet-centred. It promises to leave no one behind and to build a life of dignity for each and every individual.

Why does Slovenia believe that this new Agenda can make a difference?

First, it provides a firm commitment to implement the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals, so that all men, women, boys and girls, no matter which country they live in, are able to fulfil their basic human needs, always and forever. This was our promise 15 years ago. We have already achieved a lot, but we need to make a greater effort to fully deliver on our promise.

Secondly, the new Agenda reaffirms our commitment to the respect, protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without discrimination on any grounds. Only universality, indivisibility and the inalienability of human rights can guarantee that no one is left behind. Gender equality, the empowerment of women and the protection of their rights is an important and integral part of the new Agenda.

Thirdly, the new Agenda recognizes a strong connection between peace, security and sustainable development and, at the same time, emphasizes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

The new Agenda also responds to other global challenges such as migration. The global migration crisis, which we are currently facing not only in Europe but also in other parts of the world, requires urgent action. First and foremost, we should address its root causes and prevent any further loss of life.

My country, together with other European countries, has intensified its activities in resolving the current migration crisis in Europe. The main principles of our action are based on not only humanity and solidarity, but also security.

We should pool our efforts in combating illegal migration and suppressing the trafficking of migrants and human beings. This cannot be the responsibility of any one country; it is a shared responsibility of the whole international community.

There is another pressing global challenge that needs our immediate attention: climate change. I sincerely hope that the successful adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be complemented by an ambitious, durable, universal and legally binding agreement later this year in Paris. It goes without saying that such an agreement is essential for sustainable development, and time is quickly running out.

Implementation will be a common journey. Everyone should participate; we will be successful only if we work together. We have a strong implementation framework; it provides us with the full spectrum of means to successfully implement the new Agenda. Official development assistance (ODA) will remain a key element of development funding. In line with our public-finance capabilities, Slovenia will strive to increase the volume of ODA funds and improve the quality of ODA. We will prepare a national plan for the gradual increase of ODA so as to fulfil our commitment in the time frame of the new Agenda.

Slovenia's approach to the implementation process will follow two tracks. We will implement the new Agenda at the national level, including through the preparation of a new Slovenia development strategy, which is already under way.

We will also contribute to poverty eradication and sustainable development on the basis of updated legal and strategic documents on international development cooperation. In the 10 years of my country's involvement in international development cooperation, we have contributed to the economic, social and environmental progress of more than 80 developing countries.

Our goal for the future is clear: to further strengthen our international development cooperation and demonstrate that the efforts of small donor countries can also be an important contribution to the realization of global development objectives. I am confident that we will succeed.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the opportunity of a lifetime. We need to seize it. We need to embrace it. We need to realize it. We should not forget that we are doing this for our people, our future generations and our planet.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia for his statement.

Mr. Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu.

Mr. Enele Sosene Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Sopoaga (Tuvalu): I have the honour to speak on behalf of Tuvalu on this occasion of the Summit for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. May the good Lord bless us all at this gathering.

I would first like to add to others' my congratulations to Mr. Sam Kutesa, outgoing President of the General Assembly, to the current President and to the co-Chairs of the Summit for their extraordinary leadership of our work. I also wish to commend the Secretary-General and his staff and all the Permanent Missions and their partners for their dedicated commitment to producing the Goals and targets for our new Agenda.

Today, as we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), we were aware that this year is also the seventieth anniversary of this body, for which I offer Tuvalu's sincere congratulations. Long live the United Nations, its Charter and its noble values and principles. We have all worked hard and diligently to map out the future we want — a world where poverty and hunger are eradicated; where peace and security, good governance and opportunity are shared equally; where every citizen's human rights and larger freedoms are honoured and realized with dignity; where all individuals are empowered to better their lives and our planet is healed and sustained for successive generations. That is everybody's agenda.

The new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the road map for them must be implemented with commitment and dedication if we are to transform our world into one that is focused on peace, security and prosperity. Our actions must address the root causes of poverty, human vulnerabilities and human insecurity. They must free the human race from all discrimination and address our increasing disparities, including trade imbalances and the digital divide.

Our primary target must be the most marginalized, the poorest and most vulnerable and the discriminated against; those who have lost their self-worth or dropped out of formal education systems; those who lack access to health care; those whose human rights are ignored or who are marginalized by the nature of their countries' physical geographical features. They are the ones we should focus on, for they are the ones who are closest to being easily left behind. Each country will craft and drive its own agenda, but we support wholeheartedly the call for partnerships in the means of implementation and, for example, the inclusion of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, as agreed on in Addis Ababa at the third International Conference on Financing for Development. It is also critical to ensure that application of the means is based on an inclusive approach aimed at benefiting all.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Government and the people of Tuvalu, to offer our sincere and heartfelt appreciation to the Members of the United Nations that, directly or indirectly, have helped Tuvalu with its development via the pathway of the Millennium Development Goals. We are also grateful to non-members of the United Nations, including partners such as Taiwan, Republic of China, for their continued assistance, which has greatly supported our development efforts. It is vital that this type of multilateralism be maintained if the 17 new Goals and 169 targets that we have set are to be strategically attained.

Our new Agenda must be supported by institutional reforms in the United Nations targeted to making the Secretariat, the General Assembly and the Security Council fit for purpose. We must strengthen capacities and technicians not only at the United Nations but also at the country level. It is also our view that a reformed Security Council should include climate change as a security issue and a permanent agenda item, given the security threats that the effects of climate change are causing, particularly for highly vulnerable countries, such as small island developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and other parts of the world.

We must also commit to monitoring and reviewing our progress in order to sustain and focus our transformative Agenda. The role of the High-level Political Forum, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, is critical in that regard. In addition, we should conduct a proper review, particularly where the Economic and Social Council is concerned, of the criteria for least developed countries and their application, especially to the least developed SIDS, in order to better account for those countries' unique vulnerabilities.

Under the regime of the Millennium Development Goals, we achieved successes. But there are still many unresolved issues, gaps and chronic and protracted discords. The world is so technically and technologically sophisticated and yet, for example, we cannot overcome the energy crisis that is linked to the causes of climate change. We have one question: why? Why are we still in this situation? We world leaders who are here to formally adopt the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we hold the answer to that question. We, the leaders, must step up for we, the people. As much as we need capacity enhancement, science, data and new technology, we must match all that with leadership. Leadership must demand that the only things that should be left behind are wars, inequality, bad governance, self-interest, greed and a profit-only mentality. Leadership means re-targeting our efforts away from strife and towards saving lives. Leadership is about reaching the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance, and about helping the most vulnerable, particularly least developed countries and SIDS. Tuvalu welcomes the parliamentary speakers' 38-point declaration, which encourages us leaders to be accountable for our SDG outputs.

Tuvalu is pleased that, in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the 2030 Agenda, SIDS are recognized as a special case with unique vulnerabilities — social, economic and environmental — and particularly a vulnerability to the effects of climate change. If the post-2015 Agenda seeks to respect, protect and fulfil all human rights for all peoples, we need, at the forthcoming Paris Conference on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to reach a credible and comprehensive agreement that sets a goal of achieving a temperature stabilization level well below 1.5° Celsius above that of pre-industrial times. It must include a new stand-alone, permanent loss-and-damage mechanism that is separate from adaptation activities. It must also include a mechanism that facilitates the fast tracking and mobilization of funding resources for urgent adaptation actions.

But the vast disparity and physical distance between SIDS such as Tuvalu and world centres, especially the United Nations, makes it imperative that under the new Agenda we see increased connectivity and inclusiveness, and certainly an increased presence of the United Nations on the ground in Tuvalu and other far-flung SIDS. We must not continue to marginalize these most vulnerable members simply because of their distance from Headquarters. They remain deserving and needy, particularly as they try to cope with the elements of disaster and climate change.

In conclusion, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to members of the international community, including our own island neighbours and bodies in the Pacific, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Development Bank and others, and to our bilateral friends from around the globe who so kindly responded by supporting and helping Tuvalu following the devastation wrought by Tropical Cyclone Pam earlier this year. We greatly value their support and look forward to continuing our partnership in our recovery and future protection efforts. We thank them. Tuvalu will never forget their generosity.

Tuvalu pledges its full support to the new agenda, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". Let us work together to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want, and to heal and secure our one planet for successive generations. Let us lead by example in order to shift the world's development trajectory onto a sustainable and resilient path, a path that can save human beings, Tuvalu and the world.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of Tuvalu for his statement.

Mr. Enele Sosene Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Barbados.

Mr. Freundel Stuart, Prime Minister of Barbados, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Stuart (Barbados): There are defining moments in human affairs when differences dividing countries and cultures are laid aside in pursuit of the higher common purpose of benefiting all humankind. Our modern era has witnessed two such moments: the Millennium Declaration in 2000 and now the establishment of a post-2015 development agenda. The gathering of world leaders to adopt eight international development goals some 15 years ago represented unprecedented hope at the dawn of a new millennium. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) highlighted the intention of the global community to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

Since becoming independent, in 1966, Barbados has pursued the goal of eradicating many of the social and economic contradictions that we inherited from our colonial past. In that connection, the Administration over which I have the honour to preside has crafted a vision of creating a Barbados that is socially balanced, economically viable, environmentally sound and characterized by good governance. That vision brings us squarely in line with the ideals embodied in the international development agenda that this special Summit of the United Nations has been convened to endorse.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) developed a set of region-specific MDGs to cater to the unique realities of our region and member States. Gender, violence, and chronic non-communicable diseases were and are among our priorities. Though buttressed by our dreams, our progress in achieving the MDGs has regrettably been limited by our capacity to finance our development objectives. With the citizens of the world impatient for progress, we must invest our collective intellectual capital and the technology at our disposal in the design of the tools and the mechanisms we need to realize the promise of our stated goals.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) provides us with a blueprint for achieving the transformation we seek. But that blueprint must be translated into reality and take us seamlessly from the eight Goals and 18 targets of the MDGs to the 17 Goals and 169 targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. The unprecedented scope of the 2030 Agenda rises to the challenges facing today's interconnected world and is firmly rooted in the three dimensions of sustainable development — the economic, environmental and social. Even more important, it is undergirded by a people-centred and planet-sensitive ethos, with people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnership at its core.

The outcome of the third International Conference on Financing for Development — the Addis Ababa Action Agenda — specifies the policies and actions needed to finance our countries' sustainable development. Now is the time for us to address the need to develop transparent measurements of progress that reach far beyond the narrow scope of per capita gross domestic product. Small island developing States (SIDS) such as ours should not be punished for the limited development that we have been able to achieve, very often against stubborn and unyielding odds.

The third International Conference of Small Island Developing States, held last year in Samoa, built on the platforms of the prior Barbados Programme of Action of 1994 and the 2005 Mauritius Strategy of Implementation. It unequivocally reinforced the status of SIDS as a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities. The long-term effects of climate change, including the ravages of more frequent, intense and destructive natural disasters, pose an existential threat to small island developing States. The recent devastation of our sister country Dominica by Tropical Storm Erika is a stark reminder of that peril. Barbados and other CARICOM countries are firmly of the view that climate change can be tackled only through a comprehensive international effort, grounded in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). For us, sustainable development and climate change are inextricably linked. Let us use the momentum of this Summit to ensure the adoption of a meaningful and ambitious accord in Paris at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC.

Our region desperately requires a strategy of debt relief in order to create more fiscal space and engineer much-needed economic development in order to realize the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda. A re-examination of the basis for the graduation of the countries of our region from access to concessional finance remains an urgent necessity. As we look towards the future, it is important, indeed necessary, that previously agreed commitments be kept. The United Nations, on the strength of its universal membership, legitimacy and comprehensive mandate, will play a pivotal role over the next 15 years in reaching the goal of sustainable development.

But we cannot put new wine into old wineskins. As we consider the post-2015 development agenda, adequate, consistent and predictable financial support must be mobilized and allocated for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The acid test of the value of the Goals will be their impact on the quality of life of ordinary men, women and children everywhere.

The United Nations was created at a time when the world was grappling with the political and economic consequences of a vast global conflict. Some 70 years later, though much has changed, we have failed to eliminate the scourge of war. Development cannot be achieved in the absence of peace. The post-2015 development agenda is our compass as we continue on the journey towards a better world for all. With political will and dedicated action, Agenda 2030 will ensure a safe and secure future for current and future generations. We cannot allow this historic opportunity to slip from our grasp.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of Barbados for his statement.

Mr. Freundel Stuart, Prime Minister of Barbados, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Desalegn (Ethiopia): It gives me great pleasure to address this Summit of the United Nations on the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (resolution 70/1). I wish to extend my congratulations to the co-Chairs who are presiding over this historic Summit.

It is difficult to conceive of a more fitting time than this, the seventieth anniversary of our universal Organization, for embarking on a newly revitalized international partnership for development. The genuine hope we have is that this Summit signifies the commitment we all have made to transforming our world. That is what the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for.

There is no doubt that our future lies in the actions we take to carry out the commitments we make. Never before has the international community made such a bold and far-sighted commitment as the one we make now towards eradicating extreme poverty in a relatively short period of time:

At the dawn of the new millennium, we leaders made the landmark commitment in the Millennium Declaration to spare no effort to free our people from the dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty. It was that commitment that gave birth to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which have been a true inspiration to all of us, and, through their implementation, we have saved the lives of millions and improved conditions for many more. The past 15 years — the period of the MDGs — have indeed been ones of notable achievements. These accomplishments inspire us all to spare no effort and to continue to do more to overcome the many development challenges our world currently faces.

Though much progress has been made in implementing the MDGs, we should nonetheless acknowledge that, by and large, the MDGs are unfinished business. Progress has been uneven across regions and countries. Moreover, despite that progress, many millions still live in poverty and hunger, without access to basic services. The gap between the poorest and richest households has widened. Gender inequality persists. Climate change and environmental degradation undermine the progress achieved, and conflicts remain the biggest threat to human development. All these challenges call for urgent and concerted actions.

As we stand at the dawn of a new development era, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) we are about to begin implementing will require far more concerted and resolute efforts than those witnessed in connection with the implementation of the MDGs. This is not because the SDGs are simply big in numbers, but because they are universally applicable and much more ambitious.

There is no doubt that the SDGs represent aspirations to transform the international development cooperation landscape. Failure to achieve them in one country or region means failure in the entire world. We need to draw lessons from the implementation of the MDGs.

One of the factors that contributed to the difficulties of fulfilling the MDGs was the problem encountered in the provision of adequate means of implementation. As we are about to embark on a journey to implement the new Sustainable Development Agenda, we need to commence the journey with confidence, knowing that a great deal of work has already been done prior to this Summit. It was a couple of months ago that we agreed on means of implementation for the realization of the SDGs when we gathered in Addis Ababa to adopt a comprehensive policy framework — the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. That agenda has now become an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda and is critical for the achievement of the SDGs. It is therefore crucial that the international community ensures that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda is fully implemented so that the SDGs can be fully realized. We are pleased that this is well reflected in the 2030 Agenda.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development means many things for us in the developing world, particularly in Africa. It means the beginning of the fight to eliminate extreme poverty once and for all. It means the commencement of an important journey to transform our respective economies into high-value sectors to generate jobs for our youth. It means developing human-resource capacity through the creation of a learning society. And it means conserving our environment while adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change.

The coming years will no doubt continue to witness changes in the global political and economic landscapes. In order to serve our collective interest, these changes must be shaped by us in conformity with our common but differentiated responsibilities. The role that the United Nations plays in this regard is critical, and this Summit is an opportunity we must seize to commit to the realization of the aims and purposes of the Organization. For all its imperfections, the United Nations is still an institution for which there is no substitute. As we commemorate its seventieth anniversary this year, the task that we give the Organization should be matched by the necessary political support to enable the United Nations to discharge its responsibilities.

We in Ethiopia are committed to embarking on the important journey of implementing the SDGs. We have now launched our next five-year national development plan — the Growth and Transformation Plan. The task of mainstreaming the SDGs into that plan could not have come at a better time. The alignment of these development strategies therefore affords us the opportunity to pursue our efforts to build a resilient and greener economy. As much as we are determined to achieve our development objectives through the mobilization of our domestic resources, we stand a better chance of realizing them tully and effectively if our efforts are supplemented by support from our development partners, whose contributions have been paramount over the years. We are confident that through continued and strengthened collaboration, including in connection with securing and protecting peace, we can do even more to achieve the transformative Agenda that we have.

This Summit of ours once again affords us the chance to pledge our commitment to humankind. Let this be the occasion from which will emerge a collective resolve to embark on a genuine journey of building a safer and prosperous world where no one is left behind.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for his statement.

Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Lyonchoen Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Tobgay (Bhutan): The United Nations is 70 years old. For 70 years, the United Nations has maintained global peace, protected human rights and upheld international law. It has helped to stop the use and spread of nuclear weapons and prevented a third world war. For 70 years, the United Nations has reaffirmed the sovereignty of nations, bringing into its fold new Member States, irrespective of their size, population, wealth or power. This is especially important — in fact, it is critical — for otherwise small, vulnerable countries like mine, Bhutan.

For 70 years, the United Nations has led the global fight against poverty, disease and hunger. As we conclude the Millennium Development Goals, our peoples are now healthier, they live longer, and they are better educated.

Today, the United Nations is poised to do more. We have set ourselves an ambitious Agenda for Sustainable Development, one that calls for collective action to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and save our planet.

The vision and principles set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development resonate strongly with my country's own development philosophy of gross national happiness. As early as the 1970s, we in Bhutan stressed that gross national happiness is more important than gross national product.

Gross national happiness is a holistic approach to development aimed at improving the happiness and well-being of our people. For that, we carefully balance material growth with social inclusiveness and environmental sustainability, all within a framework of good governance.

Gross national happiness drives development in Bhutan. Our people, for example, enjoy free health care and free education, even though we are a poor country. And our economy is still largely clean, green and renewable.

But more importantly, six years ago, in 2009, we pledged to remain carbon-neutral. In fact, we are carbon-negative. That is because 72 per cent of our country is under forest cover, and more than half of my country is protected as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. And, most importantly, we have institutionalized good governance by embracing democracy.

Democracy in Bhutan is unique in that we, the people, did not want democracy; we did not demand it, and we certainly did not fight for it. Instead, democracy was instituted in an unprecedented manner. It was imposed by our King, against the will of his people. This, in my humble view, is gross national happiness in action.

His Majesty the King has called gross national happiness "development with values". This, in effect, is what the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are about: development with values. My Government has already started integrating the SDGs in our own development plans, and we look forward to working diligently to fulfil their promise.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an exciting testament to the collective will and wisdom of all nations to transform our world meaningfully. But to transform our world, we must first transform ourselves; we must transform the United Nations; we must transform it to make it fit for purpose, to implement the SDGs.

The United Nations has served us well for 70 years.

To serve us for the next 70 years, it must stay relevant. And to stay relevant, it must reflect the geopolitical realities of today. Countries such as India, Japan, Brazil and Germany must be made to serve as permanent members in the Security Council, and Africa must be appropriately represented.

If we do not reform the United Nations, we risk making this sacred institution irrelevant and ineffective. That would harm all nations. But small countries, vulnerable countries, countries such as mine and many others, would suffer the most.

Now, if we reform the United Nations, if we make it relevant and if we make it effective, it will continue to serve us well. And 70 years hence, our future generations will gather here, in this very Hall, and they, like us, will celebrate the United Nations for having made their world more secure, more peaceful and more prosperous.

The Acting President: I thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan for his statement.

Lyonchoen Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Prakash, Man Singh, Deputy Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

Mr. Man Singh (Nepal): I bring with me the warmest greetings to all present from the people and the Government of Nepal. This morning we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). The Agenda is both universal in scope and transformative in nature. With people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership at its foundation, the Agenda manifests our collective pledge concerning the world's sustainable development for the next 15 years.

However, if we look at the past, it tells us that adoption is not enough. Implementation remains a huge challenge and will demand huge resources. It will also require good national policies, priorities and capacities as well as robust global partnerships to realize those Goals in all dimensions of sustainable development. Most important, for any development to be sustainable, my delegation believes that people have to be at the centre of governance and have a sense of ownership in the development process. It is the responsibility of all of us to develop a system that makes people feel that they are an integral part of the process in all socioeconomic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. We are confident that, with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a national focus, we will be able to observe significant progress in our goals of peace and prosperity in the days ahead.

Development and democracy are complementary concepts and preconditions that go together. It is our firm belief that democracy is indispensable for sustainable development. That approach alone will orient to implementation ensure that the concerns and aspirations of the poorest and most vulnerable people of the world will be duly addressed and that no one is left behind.

It is against that background that Nepal expects enhanced and revitalized international support as conceived in the Agenda. Furthermore, even though undergoing reconstruction and rehabilitation work in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake that hit Nepal early this year, such international support must address, among other things, the need for capacity-building, disaster risk-reduction and national resilience-building. Besides official development assistance, debt relief and additional financial resources, we also expect support measures such as trade concessions, transfer of technology, special economic packages, including foreign direct investment, in an adequate, consistent and coherent manner. That is even more necessary for least developed and landlocked countries like Nepal, which are economically vulnerable and prone to disasters. Experience in the field of international development operations suggest that there exists a gap between commitments and delivery. That is not a good indicator. We must therefore devise a monetary mechanism to ensure that commitments are translated into actions and actions into results in an effective and time-bound manner.

The United Nations has been instrumental in setting the stage for the deliberations and adoption of this people-centred transformative Agenda. We sincerely hope we will be as proud of our achievements when we assess progress on the implementation of the Agenda after 15 years.

Before I conclude, let me share with this Summit meeting that, in the past week, Nepal promulgated an inclusive democratic Constitution written by the people's elected representatives in the Constituent Assembly. The promulgation of the Constitution was the culmination of nine years of dialogue and negotiations among parties with extremely opposed views and a transformation of the decades of armed conflict into the peace process preceding it. The Constitution is a historic achievement for the people of Nepal. The Constitution-making process was democratic, inclusive, participatory and transparent. The Constitution institutionalizes the federal democratic republican governance system. It firmly invests in its rights-based approach to development and seeks to fulfil the aspirations for sustainable peace, good governance, development and prosperity within an overall framework of democratic policy. We sincerely thank our neighbours, India and China, and all those Member States and international organizations that supported us in the process of historic transformation.

The Acting President: I now call on Ms. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia.

Ms. Nandi-Ndaitwah (Namibia): I am delivering this statement on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia. At the outset, I would like to express sincere appreciation and thanks to the President of the General Assembly for his able leadership and excellent stewardship in hosting this United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. I also commend the previous President of the General Assembly at the sixty-ninth session for having successfully steered the negotiation process for the post-2015 development agenda.

There is an adage: "When you lose hope, you lose everything". The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) gave hope to millions of people living in poverty. For Namibia, being one of the countries that championed the launch of the Millennium Development Goals process, the significance of the MDGs cannot be overemphasized, as ample evidence exists to attest to their tangible impact. Therefore, poverty eradication must remain the central and overarching objective of the post-2015 development agenda in order to continue to transform the lives of the majority of people living in absolute poverty and to reinforce the commitments of the international community to eradicate poverty in all its forms by 2030.

It is Namibia's strong belief that the post-2015 development agenda is a historic opportunity to eradicate extreme poverty and lead us to a world of prosperity, sustainability, equity and dignity for all. The Agenda is also a major transformational shift that puts sustainable development at the core of the development agenda, thereby transforming economies to drive inclusive growth, to build accountable institutions, to ensure good governance and peaceful societies and to forge a new global partnership based on cooperation, equity and human rights.

Namibia has declared war on poverty. Therefore, the global recognition that the eradication of poverty is the greatest challenge facing humankind must be effectively addressed, and the post-2015 development agenda must deliver on that noble promise. Achieving an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), will require an equally ambitious, comprehensive, holistic and transformative approach with respect to the means of implementation. This should be supported by effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, sound policies and effective governance at all levels.

In this regard, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda we adopted in July 2015 should anchor, reinvigorate and strengthen financing for development, identify the obstacles encountered for the achievement of the goals and the action needed to overcome those constraints as well as the support required to implement the post-2015 development agenda.

As a member of the African Union, Namibia is convinced that the implementation of the African Union's Agenda 2063 will complement the realization of the post-2015 development agenda. Additional financial resources, foreign direct investment, official development assistance and public and private financing remain important sources of financing for poverty eradication and development.

In this regard, as we call upon developed countries to meet and scale up their existing bilateral and multilateral official development assistance commitments to assist developing countries, we also call for favourable financing terms as well as a true global partnership in terms of trade and investment, as we believe this will enable us to meet the SDGs as set out in the post-2015 development agenda. Climate change is a global problem and requires a global response from all of us in both the developed and developing countries. Africa has been singled out as being the most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. As one of the driest countries on Earth, Namibia, like some developing countries, faces the immense challenges of drought, land degradation and desertification. Hence we welcome targets 13 and 15.

Later this year, in December, we will convene in Paris for the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to adopt a legally binding agreement that will give us hope with respect to our aspirations to address the challenges posed by climate change, for this generation and those to come.

The Millennium Development Goals were about inclusion and not exclusion. The same principles are embodied in the SDGs. Therefore, the international community has an obligation to ensure that the people of both Palestine and Western Sahara realize their inalienable right to self-determination and the creation of their independent and sovereign State.

Let me conclude by stating that the time to demonstrate the necessary political will and leadership to holistically implement the post-2015 development agenda is now. Everyone must be included, including women and young people. It is our duty as leaders to do the right thing and address the issue of poverty eradication in order to ensure that no one is left behind. This is the best legacy we can collectively bequeath to posterity. Namibia commits itself to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Joël Morgan, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Transport of the Republic of Seychelles.

Mr. Morgan (Seychelles): I am addressing the Assembly on behalf of President James Alix Michel, President of the Republic of Seychelles.

In September 2000, Seychelles, along with 189 other States Members of the United Nations, endorsed, at the United Nations Summit, the Millennium Declaration, which included eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Today we can say that a lot of changes have taken place at the global, regional and national levels during these past 15 years. However, as we come to the end of this 15-year process, it is important to note that there are still huge disparities across and within countries.

The MDGs have saved the lives of millions and improved conditions for many more. The work is not complete, and it must continue in this new development era. Seychelles takes pride in having achieved almost all of the MDGs; some were achieved even before the process was launched. For example, in education and health, Seychelles had already had near 100 per cent enrolment of both boys and girls in primary schools. Women giving birth were assured of the best possible care and of the attention of trained medical personnel. Child mortality rates were already low compared with many other countries with similar per capita gross domestic product. Environmental protection was already a flagship cause for Seychelles. Despite these achievements, my country continues to inspire greater impetus to ensure that the few challenges of the MDGs that remain unaccomplished are fully met.

Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets, which are incorporated and indivisible, have been announced today. World leaders have never before pledged common action and ventured across such an expansive and universal policy agenda. Reflecting on the MDGs and looking further to the next 15 years, there should be no issue that we cannot deliver on given our mutual responsibility to put an end to poverty, leave no one behind and generate a world of human dignity for everyone.

We believe that the post-2015 development agenda must continue to put greater emphasis on the fight against climate change and poverty and on education, including early childhood development and higher education, as well as a strong emphasis on gender equality as tools to achieve sustainable development and strengthen international support for small island developing States (SIDS).

The more widely the SDGs, a to-do list for people and the planet, are understood by everyone, the more politicians will take them seriously and the more Governments will finance them properly, refer to them frequently and make them work. It is the most important long-term plan we have for our survival.

Seychelles continues to develop its national strategic documents, which we hope, as we aim to achieve the SDGs, will provide policies for superior community commitment in building the future of the Seychelles we ought to have. We have this year extended the level of education from 10 to 11 years of compulsory studies. The year 2015 was an important one in achieving agreement on diverse key development issues, from the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to the forthcoming Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris.

Seychelles supports the outcome document transforming our world, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I wish to highlight Goal 14, "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development". For SIDS, our smallness and our seclusion are structural elements of our vulnerability. Ever-increasing threats surround our oceans, and the failure to call for control of these threats increases this vulnerability. With 75 per cent of our planet made up by the oceans, the weak global governance of our oceanic spaces undermines our overall security. We are all vulnerable.

Seychelles, like many SIDS, has not agreed to simply be an onlooker with respect to these issues. We are adopting the perspective of being a large oceanic nation. We are aiming to better manage our oceans, setting an example of good oceanic governance. Like many other island nations, Seychelles claims a vast exclusive economic zone of 1.3 million square kilometres, the second-largest in Africa. The country has reaped considerable benefits from its ocean resources, with the development of fisheries, tourism, trade, and international and domestic shipping to support trade.

At the same time, it has established itself as a global leader in marine conservation, with the Government having time and again maintained that healthy oceans and seas are vital to a sustainable future for the whole planet and not just for small island developing States. Undeniably, over the past few years, the emerging concept of the "blue economy" has been adopted by many SIDS as a method for realizing sustainable growth based on an ocean economy.

Seychelles calls for the enhancing of the capacity of developing nations to sustainably harness the potential of oceanic spaces. With the support of the United Arab Emirates, Seychelles held its first blue economy conference in January 2014, organized as part of the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week. The conference was a success, as it enabled the global community to share its views and objectives for the future in relation to the "blue economy" concept, and it established a solid partnership with a view to mobilizing more research into ocean-based economic activity compatible with the sustainable development of our planet. The success of this first conference led to the pledge made at the twenty-second ordinary session of Heads of States and Governments of the African Union to embrace and expand the blue economy concept as an essential part of Africa's future development and expansion, as outlined in the AU's Agenda 2063: The Africa we want.

Seychelles is planning to host a second blue economy summit in January 2016, with the support of the United Arab Emirates during the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week. The summit is perfectly timed to build upon the outcomes of this Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda and of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris later this year, and will conclude with a declaration in support of the implementation of the blue economy concept through an enrichment of relevant national and international initiatives for concrete deliverables. Seychelles will continue to reaffirm the importance of the blue economy as part of the efforts to develop a "green economy" to better harness our natural resources for sustainable development, for combating climate change and for growth and food security.

The new Sustainable Development Goals and targets, which will come into effect on 1 January 2016, will channel the decisions that we take over the next 15 years. All of us will work to put the Agenda into operation within our own countries and at the regional and global levels, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and while respecting our national policies and priorities. They are universal goals and targets that engage the whole world, developed and developing countries alike. No one should be left behind.

The Acting President: I now call on Ms. Faeqa bint Saeed Al Saleh, Minister of Social Development of Bahrain.

Ms. Al Saleh (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to transmit to the General Assembly the greetings of His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, who entrusted me with the honour of representing him at this Summit. He wishes the participants every success.

This Summit coincides with the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. The founding Member States undertook not to allow another world war to emerge, pursuant to the commitments entered into seven decades ago when the Charter of the United Nations was adopted. This by itself underscores the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) because it is a collective agreement that will permit our countries to rise to a higher level of development and prosperity, which can only be achieved if the obstacles that prevent us from achieving our goals are overcome and taking into consideration the cultural and religious specificities of every society. We can therefore say that the Agenda, with its 17 Goals, allows us an opportunity to design a joint action plan that gives us clear and tangible mechanisms for development while protecting our special human achievements.

The Kingdom of Bahrain was able to implement most of the Millennium Development Goals, which were set forth in the year 2000, particularly in the fields of education, health, child welfare, poverty elimination, ending illiteracy, promoting the role of women, enhancing the role of youth, supporting gender equality and promoting respect for human rights. To those ends, the comprehensive development strategy that was pursued by His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa played a fundamental role in contributing to the success of the work of the Government of His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Prime Minister received the International Telecommunication Union's Sustainable Development Award for 2015, which confirms the international community's appreciation for the efforts exerted by the Kingdom of Bahrain and its achievements in the field of sustainable development. It also signifies the forward-looking vision of our Government.

Our vision has already been covered in the United Nations reports on human development over the past few years, the most recent of which made special mention of the Kingdom of Bahrain's achievements in the field of human development. My country continues to promote events and programmes to guarantee the implementation of the post-2015 development goals in their three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in accordance with the Kingdom's strategy.

To promote these objectives, my country decided to host a ministerial conference on the implementation of the post-2015 strategic development agenda under the auspices of Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Bahrain's Prime Minister, on 6 and 7 December 2015. This conference is part of the efforts made by the Kingdom to host many regional and international conferences and meetings to promote sustainable development. The Kingdom of Bahrain would therefore be among the first countries of the world to host a follow-up conference on the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda as adopted in our meeting.

We are all aware of the grave challenges that we are facing today. We note that we must stand together to be more determined and willing to overcome obstacles without hesitation or slacking. This meeting is proof of our determination to use our collective will to give an impetus to our efforts bring about a brighter common future through comprehensive and sustainable development for all.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Erlan Abdyldayev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Abyldayev (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): It is a great pleasure to participate in this historic United Nations Summit.

Today we adopted a long-term development agenda for the international community (resolution 70/1), which, to a great extent, will condition the preservation of our planet and ensure a good life for all human beings. The Kyrgyz Republic fully supports this ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is essential that the principles of general but differentiated responsibility, accountability and transparency be an integral part of our renewed Agenda; they will undoubtedly help to achieve its goals.

Kyrgyzstan commends the fact that our new development Agenda specifically addresses the needs of highly vulnerable countries. In that regard, we welcome the inclusion in the Agenda of the challenges currently facing mountainous countries and landlocked developing States, both categories to which Kyrgyzstan belongs. It is essential to note, however, that the prospects for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in least-developed and developing countries will also depend on solving the problem of ensuring adequate international financing. The Kyrgyz Republic hopes that the commitments made by the international community today and at the Addis Ababa Conference on Financing for Development will be met in full so that we can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. At the same time, we agree that least-developed and developing countries should increase the financing for their national programmes through the efficient use of their internal resources.

It is very important to ensure that our development Agenda is based on the experience gained through the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals while also possessing the key qualities of universality, inclusiveness and accessibility. While there can be no doubt that the international community's chief task should continue to be fighting hunger and poverty, attaining those goals requires new and inclusive approaches. We support a comprehensive approach to addressing poverty issues and combating hunger through education, health care, gender equality, the rule of law, economic development and combating climate change. We can achieve effective results only by ensuring a good balance of all three aspects of sustainable development. And we call on the States Members of the United Nations to demonstrate political will and arrive at a legally binding agreement on climate change in December at the Paris Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which can lay the foundations of a more responsible attitude to the world around us.

We are ready to use the experience we have gained and to mobilize all our available resources and capacities in order to implement our new Agenda. The Kyrgyz Republic adopted a national strategy for sustainable development as long ago as 2013. The programme puts social justice and the people's welfare at centre stage, along with protecting citizens' rights, freedoms and security, building a peaceful and lawful State with a high level of education and, most important, preserving the environment.

Factors of physical geography and climate limit our country's ability to reduce poverty reduction and increase sustainable development. In Kyrgyzstan's mountainous areas, poverty rates are above average, owing to difficult living conditions and high economic costs. Mountains, whose ecosystems are sensitive to climate change, make up more than 70 per cent of our territory. We are already seeing our glacial reserves shrink, and experts have predicted that Kyrgyzstan's glaciers could be reduced by 40 per cent by 2025. That would reduce the volume of water in Central Asia's rivers by a third. In that connection, one significant factor for sustainable development in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia is water, the shortage of which is growing faster than was expected around the world. Today water has an economic dimension as well as a humanitarian and environmental one. In that regard, Kyrgyzstan supports the cost-effective use of water resources.

The development of hydro-electric power as a branch of the "green economy" is an essential prerequisite for sustainable development. Kyrgyzstan's principled position is that water resources and hydropower are indissolubly and inseparably linked to each other, a position that fully accords with the Secretary-General's initiative in declaring 2014-2024 the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All.

We would particularly like to emphasize the importance of creating and maintaining an environment conducive to States' sustainable development. Based on its regional experience, the Kyrgyz Republic is of the view that every State has the right to determine its own development. We consider that to be an integral right that cannot be limited by anyone or anything in any way. We firmly believe that the issue of guaranteeing that right is just as immediate for the majority of developing and least-developed countries all over the world. It is particularly relevant to to landlocked and small island States, the countries most vulnerable to climate change, as well as those with large debts and few possibilities for eradicating poverty.

The Kyrgyz Republic believes that respect for and guarantees of a State's right to develop over time should form the basis of building fair international relations at the global level, along with such principles as respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and refraining from the use of force. In that regard, Kyrgyzstan considers it extremely important to promote the concept of a State's right to development and the gradual strengthening of international partnerships for Member States to that end.

In conclusion, I call on all States Members of the United Nations to unite their efforts to ensure that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that we have adopted today (resolution 70/1) accords as closely as possible with the slogan "No one must be left behind". For my part, I would like to assure the Assembly that my country will make every effort to realize the Sustainable Development Goals within its financial capabilities and taking into account its specific national development needs.

The Acting President: I now call on Ms. Aïchatou Boulama Kané, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad of the Republic of the Niger.

Ms. Boulama Kané (Niger) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to convey warm greetings from His Excellency Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President and Head of State of the Republic of the Niger, who wishes the Summit every success. On behalf of the delegation of the Niger, I would like to assure the co-Chairs of our full support for and willingness to participate in their work in fulfilling their mission. I would also like to pay well-deserved tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his leadership and commitment to the implementation process of the post-2015 development agenda that is the subject of this Summit.

As the Assembly knows, in the Millennium Declaration of 2000 the world's leaders identified the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with the overall objective of making a substantial contribution to reducing poverty and hunger and promoting economic and social development in developing countries. The new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted today at our Summit (resolution 70/1) is not only timely but, while taking into account the areas of the MDGs that remain incomplete, it is also broader and more comprehensive. And it is universal. In addition, it will promote sustainable development in an integrated manner by providing balanced emphasis on its three dimensions — the economic, social and environmental.

The adoption of this programme by all the world's nations is, in our eyes, a major commitment to our planet. We see in it the expression of a voluntarily accepted solidarity and sharing designed to ensure the survival of all. It must be emphasized that it is not just a question of solidarity of the rich towards the poor; it is also a matter of mutual solidarity and shared values, and in that regard poor nations also have much to contribute.

My country, the Niger, in the middle of the Sahelo-Saharan strip, is facing every kind of development challenge, to which there has been added in recent years and an acute security challenge. The Niger recalls the 2013 visit of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to Niamey to promote the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel at a crucial point in its history, where the dynamics of development were being thwarted by a combination of security issues and persistent climate shocks, against the backdrop of a demographic challenge.

Despite this unfavourable environment, as part of our implementation efforts of the Millennium Development Goals, we have shown significant progress, particularly in the areas of reducing poverty and hunger, education, including primary education, health, particularly in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and infant mortality reduction, with the related MDG having been achieved. However, we are fully aware of the efforts that remain for us to do. For that reason, we wholly subscribe to this vast and ambitious sustainable development programme, which we will strive to integrate into our development strategy while taking into account our national realities and priorities.

Transforming our world in 15 years through 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets is admittedly ambitious and difficult in the light of the many economic, social and cultural constraints that we face, but all of us, together — all nations — have to commit ourselves with resolve. For their part, the people of the Niger make that commitment.

Through their commitment, the people of the Niger are expressing their willingness to continue to make efforts towards eradicating poverty and hunger; their intent not to be ranked last in the world in terms of human development due to their performance in the areas of education and health; their will to ensure that youths of the Niger under 25, who make up more than

70 per cent half of the population, have a better future with decent jobs; their will to overcome the effects of climate shocks by improving the ability to adapt; their determination to continue their water mastery programme to make it accessible to all and promote the development of agriculture and the raising of livestock; their commitment to promote a just and culturally fulfilled society in which women's empowerment is ensured; their willingness to contribute to peace and security in the world through the reaffirmation of their commitment to combat terrorism; their desire to consolidate democracy through strong democratic institutions; and, finally, their determination to continue to promote good political and economic governance.

In conclusion, I reiterate the full commitment of the Republic of the Niger to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the commitment to implementing it in a spirit of solidarity and partnership with all nations. We believe in this programme, we believe in the ability of the United Nations to lead it to a successful conclusion, and we are proud to be among those whom history will remember as having contributed positively to the transformation of the world.

The Acting President: I now call upon Mr. Jean-Claude Gakosso, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Gakosso (Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I have the great honour to speak from this rostrum on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of the Congo.

At a time when world leaders endorse before us an ambitious programme, following a process of negotiations in which my country was fully invested alongside other Member States as a member of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, my delegation can only welcome the outcome of what it sees as a great historic achievement (resolution 70/1).

It was here, in 2000, that we promised to help the Organization to adapt to the new era that was opening and strengthen its ability to manage the challenges of peacekeeping and poverty eradication. Encouraged by this promise, we then adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were intended to achieve eight targets for the fight against poverty by the year 2015. Today, at the arrival of the deadline, it seems appropriate to take the full measure of the progress made in achieving the Goals and at the same time appreciate our ability to ensure a dignified life for our peoples as we had committed to do 15 years ago.

Admittedly, since 2000, considerable progress has been made towards achieving these Goals. Global poverty continues to decline. More children than ever before now attend primary school. The infant mortality rate has fallen dramatically. Access to clean water has been greatly expanded. Targeted investments in the fight against malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis have saved millions of lives. Undeniably, the MDGs have transformed people's lives, although, especially in Africa, the eradication of poverty remains an elusive goal.

In the Republic of the Congo since 2000, remarkable progress has been made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, even if the road ahead is still long. Diverse and varied constraints require more effort from us, but our Government applies itself with determination. Therefore, to overcome these difficulties in order to go beyond the MDGs and meet the challenges of a more inclusive sustainable development, we adopted in July a national strategy for sustainable development that reconciles the demands of economic growth and those of social development.

The evaluation of the MDGs should enable us to grasp the full potential of our Organization 70 years after its creation to act and move forward together in building a world that meets the aspirations of our States and our peoples. We have just adopted a new framework for post-2015 development — a programme that we wanted to be transformative, innovative, universal and centred on the three dimensions of sustainable development. However, the implementation of the Agenda will require suitable and sufficient internal and external financing that can ensure that our lofty aspirations are long-lasting. To do so, I believe that we must undertake ambitious, robust reforms of the global financial system by devising new rules that would allow States to enhance their capacity to mobilize development resources.

This, in our view, is the relevance of the programme of action emenating from the third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in July. We believe that the Agenda's implementation will be a decisive step towards ensuring the successful meeting of upcoming deadlines and for the future of humankind and the legacy we must bequeath to future generations and posterity.

I would like to express the hope that the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December, will lead to an agreement that breaks new ground, which will be crucial to reaching the new development Goals that we have just adopted.

Our destinies are interconnected, and the bright future we want can be built only if we take action together, if we act on different fronts by basing our future actions on new paradigms based on sustainable development. The success of this transformative Agenda depends fully on the political will of our Governments and the determination that we must demonstrate in its implementation for a more generous world with greater solidarity.

The Acting President: I now call on Ms. Niermala Badrising, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Suriname.

Ms. Badrising (Suriname): On behalf of the President of the Republic of Suriname, His Excellency Desiré Delano Bouterse, and the Government and the people of my country, I wish to congratulate the Assembly and the international community on the convening of this Summit and the adoption by world leaders of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

We welcome the fact that the Agenda has made provisions to include unfinished matters in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We also welcome the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and its focus for the next 15 years on people, planet and prosperity. We endorse the targets and the Goals as well as the integral role of peace and partnership in this regard.

For the past five years, closing the inequality gaps in my country has become a high priority in the social contract between my President and the people of Suriname. Suriname has therefore placed special emphasis on improving education, health and its social conditions. In this regard, primary education is now free of charge for all children in Suriname. In addition, we are implementing a national after-school programme with the aim of enhancing conditions for better learning. We further established a universal medical insurance programme, including the provision of health insurance, free of charge, to senior citizens and children below 16 years of age.

Since non-communicable diseases are leading to decreased productivity and have now become the principal cause of death in Suriname and in the Caribbean region, we are developing policies and programmes to fight these diseases, including by promoting healthy lifestyles. In addition, legislation has been adopted establishing a national minimum wage and a national pension floor for all workers.

Despite all of these efforts to achieve sustainable development, we cannot ignore the challenges we face in realizing these objectives, especially as a middle-income country. In this regard, we support the recognition in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the special challenges of middle-income countries.

Climate change is a major threat to my country. We are particularly vulnerable to climate change because of our low-lying coast, where 80 per cent of our population resides and major productive sectors operate. Suriname has set an example to the world that we can be carbon-negative. My country has maintained a forest cover of well over 90 per cent of its total land area and a deforestation rate of 0.02 per cent.

Suriname looks forward to a successful outcome of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris later this year. Our commitment and objective is to continue our tradition of protecting our environment. We are ready for partnerships, in particular those related to cooperation within the context of adaptation and mitigation.

A revitalized global partnership for development is of paramount importance for the successful implementation of this new Agenda on the ground. Suriname reaffirms South-South cooperation as an important vehicle to advance sustainable development and achieve greater unity and solidarity among developing countries.

My Government supports the people-centred approach of the sustainable development agenda, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable in society: the elderly, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, children, women and youth. Hence every effort possible needs to be undertaken to invest in increasing their active involvement and opportunities in society, including in productive sectors. In particular, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as the elimination of all forms of violence against them, should be ensured.

In conclusion, success and a better world will depend on all of us, individually and collectively. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently stated: "We cannot have a Plan B, because we do not have a Planet B".

Therefore, we have to be bold and strong in our political and financial resolve, since failure is not an option.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Mr. Kamilov (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): It is with great satisfaction that I convey my greetings to all participants. I will briefly touch upon some of the proposals and issues discussed today at the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda.

First, allow me to underscore that the Republic of Uzbekistan supports the new Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), put forward by the Secretary-General for the future of humankind, which contains the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the period 2016-2030. This should become the logical and appropriate continuation of the Millennium Development Goals process for 2000 to 2015.

The Republic of Uzbekistan, according to international economic and financial bodies, occupies fifth place globally among States with rapidly developing economies. During the past 10 years, in spite of the ongoing global economic crises, gross domestic product grew on average by more than 8 per cent. Over the years of independent development, that is, the past 24 years, our economy has grown more than fivefold and the population's real income ninefold. Average life expectancy rose from 67 years to 73 years; for women, to 75 years. About 60 per cent of the State budget is being channelled into social development, including into education; that is, 10 per cent to 12 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), with the share of expense items in State budget expenditures making up 35 per cent. That is particularly important if it is understood that a huge part of our population, 60 per cent, is under 30 years of age.

Large-scale reforms in health care in 2009 allowed us to achieve, as envisaged by the Millennium Development Goals, a one third decrease in the child mortality rate, and in 2013, we achieved a one-third decrease in maternal mortality. By 2009 we had reduced the spread of HIV/AIDS. Indicators of tuberculosis sickness rates decreased by 1.6 times since the peak level of 2002. By 2013, not a single case of malaria was registered in the country.

The measures undertaken in raising environmental sustainability enabled a reduction in the volume of pollution emissions per capita from 95 kilograms in the year 2000 to 61 kilograms in 2015. Over the past 15 years, we were able to reduce the GDP energy usage by more than two times our original energy usage.

Conditions with regard to gender equality have tangibly changed. About 50 per cent of the total number of those engaged in the economy are women. We would like to specifically stress that the 2016-2030 programme for deepening and reforming education and economic structures, as well as expanding private ownership and private enterprise, will serve as a strong basis for our efforts. Our main target is for our country to join the ranks of States with an above average income level by 2030, according to standard world indicators.

Today, the international community continues to pay particular attention to the disastrous consequences of climate change. Major environmental disasters have become commonplace for the first time in history, such as the tragedy of the Aral Sea, which, within the span of one generation, is on the verge of complete disappearance. Dramatic climate change was felt not only in Central Asia, but also in other regions. As a direct consequence of the drying up of the Aral Sea, a new saline desert with an area of more than 5.5 million hectares of land has emerged on the exposed part of the Aral Sea. Sandstorms rage for more than 90 days a year, carrying into the atmosphere over 100 million tons of dust and toxic salts. The threatening impact of the Aral Sea catastrophe is now observed throughout the world, according to international experts. Toxic salts originating from the Aral region have now been discovered on the Arctic coast, Greenland's glaciers, Norway's forests and many other parts of the Earth.

The most serious impact has been on the living conditions and the gene pool of more than 65 million people in Central Asia. The extremely adverse ecological environment, the lack of and decrease in the quality of water and the increase in dangerous diseases are just a short list of the consequences of the Aral Sea tragedy. Uzbekistan hopes that the catastrophe of the Aral Sea will be taken into consideration in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. We understand that climate change and all the related matters being discussed during this Summit will have an immediate impact on the issue. In line with the words of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon during his trip to the Aral Sea in 2010, that requires collective responsibility on the part of the entire world, not just the countries of Central Asia.

At its sixty-eighth session in 2013, on a proposal by Uzbekistan, the General Assembly adopted as an official document the programme of measures on eliminating the consequences of the drying up of the Aral Sea and averting the catastrophe of the ecological systems in the Aral Sea region. Taking into account the universal nature of the Aral Sea disaster, it is necessary to expand actions and establish specific financial mechanisms in that regard. It would be appropriate to establish under United Nations auspices a special trust fund on the Aral Sea and the Aral Sea region.

The main task would involve coordinating efforts and implementing specific programmes and projects in the following key areas: protecting health and preserving the population's gene pool; elaborating a system of effective stimuli for the socioeconomic development of the Aral Sea region; creating conditions for ensuring decent living conditions for people living in the region; preserving the ecological balance of the Aral Sea region; adopting consistent measures to fight desertification and introducing a reasonable water consumption policy; recovering and preserving the unique biodiversity of flora and fauna, which remains on the brink of extinction; and using limited water resources in the region, first and foremost the transboundary river arteries — the Amu Darya and Syr Darya — in the interests of all the countries of the region and in strict compliance with the norms of international law.

As a result of the implementation of construction plans for gigantic dams and large hydropower stations on the tributaries of those rivers, on whose waters the lives of millions of people depend, we must prevent the disruption of the natural flow of the rivers, worsening the supply in the lower areas. Such an occurrence would lead to a radical breach of the water and environmental balance and exacerbate the problem of the Aral Sea and the underlying ecological security of the region.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Wilfred Elrington, Attorney General and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Belize.

Mr. Elrington (Belize): Today marks another historic milestone in the United Nations global development journey. The identification and pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals were the defining first leg of that journey. Those goals galvanized international solidarity in an unprecedented fashion and laid the foundation for international cooperation on an internationally agreed development agenda. The newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), which consists of 17 Goals and 169 targets, requires that development policies integrate economic, social and environmental considerations. Belize is irrevocably committed to embrace this Agenda.

As a natural resource- and people-based economy, Belize has long pursued a holistic, socially and environmentally sensitive development agenda. We have developed a national strategy that fully integrates the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their targets, and our Cabinet has adopted a national growth and sustainable development strategy that was developed with the invaluable support of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The strategy brings together our national development framework, Horizon 2030, and the 2030 Agenda. It speaks to an ambitious vision for our own human ecology, namely, to live in peace and tranquillity and in harmony with nature, while enjoying a high quality of life and being enabled to look after our own development in a sustainable way. We intend to operationalize that vision through four rubrics of development — one, optimizing national income and investment; two, enhancing social cohesion and resilience; three, sustainably managing natural, environmental, historical and cultural assets; and, four, improving governance and citizen security. Collectively and in cooperation with our development partners, we will seek to realize that vision.

We know that the task ahead is a daunting one. Limited human and financial resources are enduring challenges for my small country. Small in size and hard-pressed to deal with multiple exogenous shocks and diminutive fiscal space, Belize, like many other small developing countries, is stretched.

We repeat our concern that the graduation criteria unilaterally imposed by international financial institutions upon countries like my own make it difficult for us to access grant-based and other concessional financing internationally. This situation obtains even though our small country is on the front line of confronting the prohibitively expensive adverse impacts of climate change, which contribute greatly to increased burdens to our domestic coffers in the form of high ratios of external debt to gross domestic product. This is a blight that severely afflicts all Caribbean nations.

Recalling the small island developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the revitalized global partnership entrenched in this new 2030 Agenda, Belize is moved to call for better policies to facilitate enhanced access to international public sources of financing, especially grants and highly concessional loans, for small island developing States; better multilateral trade policies to ensure improved market access for small vulnerable economies; and more inclusive governance structures at the international level to ensure that the concerns of small developing states with middle-income status are taken into account when setting and executing policies.

Our situation is further prejudiced when some of our partners from developed countries unilaterally utilize domestic measures to assess or rate our countries, subjecting us to blacklists absent any form of due process. These measures have perpetuated what can only be called an international disabling environment for our small middle-income countries and our equally small enterprises.

Belize reaffirms the call in the SAMOA Pathway for genuine and durable partnerships. The most beneficial to us are those that put our people's priorities first. We continue to deepen our partnerships globally. We firmly believe that they are essential for the successful implementation of our 2030 Agenda.

While improvements to the wider enabling environments and partnerships can catalyse transformation in our economies, we know that no such transformation can be sustained in the face of the dangerous, adverse impacts of climate change. In the case of SIDS, a simple storm can erase decades of development and erode the very land that sustains us. Ours may very well be the last generation that is seized of the opportunity and capacity to save the planet from the cataclysmic effects of climate change. Let us seize the moment. The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Paris must deliver a robust outcome that entrenches the highest ambition to address climate change.

We are at a crossroads in our development exercise. At this juncture, let us choose the right path — the sustainable and resilient path. We must safeguard Mother Earth. Let us do so with social and economic justice on our side and solidarity in our stride. Today and onward, there is no turning back.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Tshibanda N'tungamulongo (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): It is a privilege and honour for me to take the floor before the General Assembly on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Joseph Kabila Kabange, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

With the holding of this Summit devoted to the adoption of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda (resolution 70/1), we are living a historic moment with regard to institutional governance for sustainable development. Our presence here today, 15 years after the Millennium Summit, is in fact proof of our shared will to face the challenges that hinder the implementation of our common commitment, renewed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and contained in "The future we want" (resolution 66/288), to make irreversible the eradication of poverty and the reduction of inequality and to give new impetus to peace, cooperation, development, security and stability in the world.

The experience we have gained with the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has made it possible to achieve great progress and improve the living conditions of humankind. Thanks to the MDGs, more than 1 billion people have overcome extreme poverty and remarkable progress has been made in the fight against hunger and with regard to access by a large number of girls to school, and the protection of the planet. The MDGs have also helped reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and saved many from malaria. They also created new and innovative partnerships, galvanized public opinion and showed the importance of implementing ambitious goals.

With regard to the Democratic Republic of Congo, the implementation of the MDGs at the national level has been undertaken through a series of programmes, in particular the first and second generations of the national strategy for growth and poverty reduction paper, the stabilization and reconstruction plan for conflict-affected areas of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the programme for rebuilding the country called the five priorities of the Republic.

An assessment of that implementation reveals a mixed situation. In several sectors, progress suggests that we are not far from reaching the targets set for 2015. Despite the repeated armed conflicts that have weakened its resilience, slowed its economic growth and destroyed the results of many years of investment, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been able to reduce the incidence of poverty on the Congolese population from over 80 per cent in 1990 to 63.4 per cent in 2012. We expect even more significant results by making agriculture and industrialization one of our priorities in order to reduce the proportion of Congolese people who suffer from hunger, while giving jobs to those who seek them.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is also on track to achieve MDG 2, as can been seen from the fact that the net enrolment rate in primary education is now over 90 per cent.

The same applies to maternal health and the fight against HIV/AIDS and malaria. From 2001 to 2013, in just 12 years, the maternal mortality rate fell from 1,289 to 846 deaths per 100,000 births, and infant mortality fell from 126 to 58 deaths per 1,000 live births. With regard to HIV, the prevalence rate was reduced from 4.1 per cent in 2005 to 1.1 per cent in 2013, while the proportion of children under 5 sleeping under treated mosquito nets rose from 10.9 per cent in 2005 to 92.1 per cent in 2013.

With regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women, much remains to be done to lower traditional barriers and to increase the representation of women in political decision-making bodies.

With regard to MDG 7, with regard to ensuring a sustainable environment and preserving biodiversity for the good of humankind, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has increased sustainable access to improved water quality and sanitation services for a greater number of urban and rural communities. We have also increased the proportion of forested and other protected natural environments from 55 per cent in 1995 to more than 60 per cent today. The country deserves having those efforts recognized and compensated, notably through enhanced financing for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

Despite such progress observed in the world in general and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular, we must recognize that in the past 15 years of our experience with the MDGs, the prevailing reality on the ground is that of a world that remains uncertain as to the survival of humankind. Unfortunately, the elimination of poverty is still a largely unfinished task. Even worse, it remains a distant and illusory point on the horizon like a mirage unable to be achieved, much like, among other things, our work to reduce climate change.

The United Nations has sponsored several major conferences throughout the world to identify ways and means to break the vicious cycle of poverty. From those talks, a dual consensus has emerged based on the view that underdevelopment and concomitant poverty represent an affront to humankind and on the need to establish a new world order, a new global development agenda. The new Agenda is the result of long negotiations informed by the lessons learned in the implementation of the MDGs, which can of course be improved upon. However, the new Agenda is ambitious, inclusive and people-centred. If implemented by all, it could break through flagrant disparities and transform the future of humankind in a positive way. That is why the Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the responsible decision we took this morning to adopt the new development Agenda.

This historic commitment we have entered into so that our peoples can move towards development, prosperity and happiness cannot be limited to a simple adoption of the Agenda and its 17 Goals and 169 targets. We must all work to implement it by taking concrete steps to truly eradicate poverty, to enhance economic and technical cooperation, to advance on the path towards solidarity and development and to safeguard international peace and security. Without peace, democracy and justice cannot be guaranteed and development cannot be envisaged. The investment in international peace and security has the effect of generating substantial dividends throughout the world, including in the form of economic benefits.

In addition, the future we want requires common rules, principles and ambitions. We must build together a new international society that is more united and just and that espouses ethics that serve human dignity and human rights. To achieve that and to realize the aspirations of all our peoples, the United Nations remains the natural crucible. The Economic and

Social Council and agencies within the United Nations system, and particularly the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, are essential partners. Nevertheless, the ultimate responsibility for action and results rests with each State Member of the Organization. It is only at that level that we can achieve our goals. The full success of this historic Summit will depend on our leaving it full of hope with the courage and temerity to make the world a better place for all.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Yves Germain Joseph, Minister for Planning and External Cooperation of the Republic of Haiti.

Mr. Joseph (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the President of the Republic of Haiti, His Excellency Mr. Michel Joseph Martelly.

At the outset, allow me to extend the warm congratulations of the Republic of Haiti to the co-Chairs appointed to head this extraordinary Summit on development. It is a happy coincidence that the Summit is taking place at a time when the Organization is commemorating the seventieth anniversary of its Charter. This is of course a very good sign for the success of our work. Rarely has the United Nations had a strategy that has brought people so closely together as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), initiated in 2000 with the ambition of breaking the cycle of poverty for far too many people on the planet. The Millennium Development Goals have unquestionably contributed to raising the awareness of the international community and strengthening our struggle against extreme poverty in all its dimensions.

Today, 15 years later, where are we? The attainment of the Millennium Development Goals has been uneven, as we have noted during the preparatory work for this Summit. In fact, the Millennium Development Goals have led to very good policies through which remarkable results have sometimes been achieved. One of the most impressive is reducing by half extreme poverty, which was the case for more than 700 million people in a 20-year period. At the same time, the campaign against malaria and tuberculosis has prevented the deaths of millions of people. Access to safe drinking water has been expanded and millions of lives have been spared from HIV/AIDS. There has been greater access to child and maternal health-care services and education for girls, and women have had greater participation in political life. Those are just a few examples that can be considered outstanding successes.

Nevertheless, no matter how important and impressive, such progress cannot conceal the fact that often when we talk about poverty reduction, it is an illusion. How can we ignore the tragic reality of billions of individuals who continue to suffer from malnutrition or who die of hunger? Hundreds of millions of children cannot realize their full potential. Multitudes of vulnerable people live in extremely precarious situations as migrants, refugees, deported persons or those displaced in their own countries?

With regard to the Republic of Haiti, I am extremely pleased to say that the public policies implemented in recent years, largely inspired by the Millennium Development Goals, have been fruitful. Significant progress has been recently achieved in Haiti. Whether we talk about the reduction in extreme poverty and inequality, the improvement of social protections, the fight against social exclusion or the expansion of health-care coverage, the reduction of infant mortality, the access to safe drinking water or food security, to name a few essential areas, significant progress has been achieved. Three years ahead of schedule, Haiti reached the target related to reducing the prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age. In the field of education, thanks to a universal, free and compulsory education programme set up by the Martelly Administration, the country has reached an enrolment rate of around 90 per cent today, up from a 50 per cent rate in 1990. We have had other significant successes, particularly in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The cholera epidemic suddenly introduced into the country five years ago is in clear decline, even though it is still far from being eradicated.

If Haitians have good reason to be proud of the progress made with respect to the MDGs, the country still has a very long way to go. We are well aware of the immense needs of the population and the gaps and delays to make up. Basic infrastructure continues to be sorely lacking. The country's structural handicaps are severe impediments to wealth creation and to the delivery of services to the population. There are pressing and urgent environmental problems to overcome.

The experience of recent years has taught us that there is nothing inevitable about underdevelopment. Extreme poverty is not invincible; we can contain it, make it recede and work towards its complete eradication. We can reduce inequalities and combat exclusion. The results obtained in the economic and social areas, together with the democratic achievements, are opening our country to a wide range of possibilities and real prospects for modernization over the coming years.

The results of the MDG programme, with its successes and failures, provides us with lessons that will be useful in the context of the implementation of the new post-2015 development plan. For its part, the Republic of Haiti believes that the role of the State as an essential development actor is an absolute necessity, especially in sectors where the private sector is of limited value or where it has been slow to fulfil its promise. Therefore, the State should strengthen its capacity to define and implement coherent public policies and reforms to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Similarly, it is essential that Government coordination mechanisms be strengthened to improve the effectiveness of bilateral and multilateral assistance, as well as assistance from non-governmental organizations, in the context of striving to attain the SDGs. Finally, it is desirable that donors establish more flexible procedures to eliminate bottlenecks that too often limit the capacity and rate of absorption of assistance, particularly in the case of the least developed countries.

The Haitian Government fully supports the approach outlined by the United Nations to win the fight against extreme poverty. It has also endorsed in its national development strategy the broad guidelines and most of the targets set forth under the SDGs: the promotion of sustained economic growth, full employment and decent work for all, reducing inequality, putting gender equality into concrete practice and accelerating the universalization of the right to sustainable development, whether it be the right to education, health, food security, justice, energy, social protection, drinking water or a healthy environment.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) carries with it great ambitions. Such an undertaking can be achieved only if each objective is accompanied by appropriate and coherent policies, programmes and action plans and adequate funding mechanisms. But above all, what will make a difference is the political will of Member States and their determination to achieve a world free of poverty and hunger by 2030.

With the adoption of the SDGs, we undertake to complete the project begun in 2000 with the MDGs. The Republic of Haiti is committed to this struggle by the United Nations to eliminate extreme poverty and to establish a more just and equitable world with sustainable economic growth that benefits everyone. It is up to each of us, in a renewed spirit of solidarity, to mobilize and gather around our shared values and do everything we can to be able to say with pride to future generations on the day of reckoning in 2030 that the 2015 commitments were indeed met.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Mrs. Neneh Macdouall-Gaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Gambia.

Mrs. Macdouall-Gaye (Gambia): On behalf of His Excellency Sheikh Alhaji Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh Babil Mansa, President of the Republic of the Gambia, I feel deeply privileged and singularly honoured to be present here on the occasion of this historic meeting. The Government and the people of the Gambia would like to commend the United Nations and the global community for their vision in drafting the Sustainable Development Goals as the successor plan to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The articulation of the new development goals is no doubt the supreme manifestation of our collective will and desire to enhance the lives and livelihoods of humankind. It is therefore imperative that we muster greater courage, mobilize added resources and marshal our human capital to ensure that the new Sustainable Development Goals effectively and expeditiously complete the unfinished agenda of the MDGs.

As the community of nations, we have cause to celebrate, for significant progress was made during the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The global scenario indicates that the number of people living in extreme poverty has declined, remarkable achievements have been reported in school enrolment and gender parity, and there has been an astonishing reduction in the number of undernourished people.

Also in the area of health, robust and sustained immunization has reduced to more than half the under-5 mortality rate. I am happy to report that in the Gambia the targets for both infant and under-5 mortality rates have been met. It is also a source of pride and satisfaction to note that under the Millennium Development Goals the Gambia made significant strides and achieved major results, particularly with the programme for immunizing children under the age of 1 against measles. In November 2014, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations awarded the

Gambia an insignia for achieving the MDG 1 target and reducing by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. It is also to be noted that the Gambia has reduced the prevalence of undernourishment from 13.3 per cent in 1992 to 6 per cent in 2012.

In the education sector, after extending free education for girls, the Government of the Gambia was able to attain gender parity at the low basic level by 2005, at the upper basic level by 2009 and at the secondary level by 2014. In further extending free education for all of the secondary level, statistics show that in the 2015-2016 academic year, 221,550 girls have been enrolled, in comparison to 212,354 boys. In addition, this programme gives the population access to 12 years of free education from the primary to secondary levels.

Another important milestone achievement for us in the Gambia is access to safe drinking water: the Gambia reached 91 per cent coverage in 2013.

The Government of the Gambia intends to further redouble efforts to sustain and improve upon the gains we have recorded and address the challenges to improve the livelihood of all Gambians. In that regard, we are stepping up our investments in the productive sectors, infrastructure and social services.

Despite the achievements made at national and continental levels, we need to acknowledge that daunting challenges remain. There are inequalities between regions and countries and between urban and rural areas. Climate change and environmental degradation will require greater attention if we are to sustain and enhance the gains already registered. In that connection, I call on all countries to come up with an ambitious climate change treaty in Paris later this year.

Of equal significance, I call for massive investment in our youth, who are not only the pillars of our societies but the future of countries. Vocational training and skills enhancement to enable our youths to secure gainful employment and contribute to national development will be the watchword. It is therefore important that we strive to make the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as effective as possible. One way of realizing that is to mainstream the SDGs in our national developmental planning processes, giving them the weight they deserve as part and parcel of our development aspirations.

Conflicts remain the biggest challenge to development. Millions, if not billions, of dollars, which could accelerate development, are spent on arms and lethal weapons. Several million people who could have constituted our human capital for development lost their lives, or are maimed or displaced, with many others living as refugees in camps that are devoid of basic facilities. The United Nations and the entire global community must give urgent attention to addressing conflicts and make the world a safer and more secure place for all. That is central if we are going to achieve the objective of leaving no one behind under the Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs, no doubt, hold a lot of promise for the world, and we must learn from our experiences during the MDGs' implementation.

Doubtless, the SDGs are very ambitious and, as such, must be met with the same level of ambition as far as their implementation is concerned. Capacity-building, finance and technology are the prerequisites for the SDGs' success. Developing countries must therefore accelerate domestic resource mobilization through innovative practices and by involving the private sector in order to finance development.

To that end, we strongly call on the developed world to meet their overseas development assistance pledges of 0.7 per cent of gross national income. It should be noted that an assessment of Goal 8 of the MDGs indicates that only a few countries have met that target.

The transfer and diffusion of appropriate technology and capacity-building will be fundamental in the achievement of the SDGs. A multi-stakeholder partnership must be built and enhanced to mobilize and share knowledge. Expertise must be marshalled to complement the efforts of governance, particularly those of developing countries. The implementation of the SDGs cannot be left to goodwill alone. Robust mechanisms must be set up and means of verification established.

In conclusion, let it be said that the SDGs, as far as the Government of the Gambia is concerned, is a contract with humankind, and, although the United Nations may not be perfect, it is the only global institution we have which is capable of ensuring our security and development. Therefore, on behalf of the President of the Republic of the Gambia, I call on the global community to once again rally around and give undivided support to the United Nations in the noble task of uplifting the livelihoods of most notably the underprivileged. For it is only in that way that future generations will judge us in a favourable light. I wish everyone Eid Mubarak and thank them for their kind attention.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Ms. Mariame Fofana, Head of the delegation of Burkina Faso.

Ms. Fofana (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I take the floor on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Michel Kafando, President of Burkina Faso and President of the transition.

Burkina Faso welcomes the holding of this important Summit on the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (resolution 70/1). As we celebrate this new development agenda, a process which began back at the Rio+20 Conference in June 2012 , we must acknowledge the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, whose dedication and zeal have made it possible to achieve the success of this fortuitous initiative. Burkina Faso expresses its heartfelt gratitude to the two co-facilitators for their commitment and sense of compromise. We also congratulate all States on their devotion and patience, which has led to the adoption today of this new consensus document on which we pin much hope.

This Agenda, which reaffirms the principles of the Rio+20 Declaration with regard to the eradication of poverty, the fight against hunger, quality education for all and the fight against inequalities, challenges every Member State to continue the work already begun in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With the MDGs, Burkina Faso has attained results, even if the outcome still poses several challenges for us today.

This new development Agenda opens a new cycle, which gives our States an opportunity to adopt new and more ambitious perspectives in keeping with the profound and legitimate aspirations of our peoples. My delegation would also like to recognize the consensus obtained on the 17 Goals and 169 targets of the new development programme. Their indivisible nature and the commitment of all States to work for their effective implementation will ensure their awaited success.

My delegation reiterates its resolve and commitment to work towards the full realization of all those objectives. However, we would like to make a special plea regarding Goal 8, concerning youth, spearhead of our nations and the most important segment of our population. It would be inappropriate, even arbitrary, to pretend that we are building a world if in that process we set aside those to whom it is destined. Henceforth, we will spare no effort to implement that objective in order to arrive at a result that will meet the expectations of our youth.

The implementation of the new development plan undeniably demands a mobilization of resources. My delegation therefore welcomed the unanimous support for the Addis Ababa Action Agenda last July, particularly in terms of providing support to the post-2015 development agenda.

It would also be wise for the financing mechanisms of the new development agenda to incorporate the set of issues on States' adaptability to the impacts of climate change. The implementation of such an ambitious project might prove difficult, hence the need for joint action by States and a responsible commitment on the part of the entire international community. It would therefore not be fair if we, as politicians, shirked our obligations with regard to official development assistance and instead advocated a greater role for the private sector in the guise of public-private partnerships as a miracle solution for increasing investment, given that social investments, which do not generate significant profits, are not a priority for the private sector.

The success of the post-2015 development agenda will depend upon its full integration into our national, subregional and regional development strategies. It will also derive from the planning modalities to be implemented, as well as from the follow-up and evaluation mechanisms that will be put in place, which will, in due course, provide reliable statistics. Moreover, achieving the expected results will require us to establish a high-level follow-up framework. It is also important for African countries to create a stringent follow-up mechanism for the post-2015 agenda and the 2063 agenda of the African Union — a mechanism that will be capable of providing, in a timely fashion, transparent, reliable and disaggregated statistics that will yield an objective assessment of the remaining challenges, along with a step-by-step analysis of the outlook for their resolution.

As was stressed by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development held in New York from 26 June to 8 July, the problems of climate change remain central to our agenda and deserve particular attention in the implementation process. In that regard, whether we address desertification, land degradation or drought, my country, Burkina Faso, along with other developing countries in general, remains extremely vulnerable to climate change. My delegation would like to urge all stakeholders to redouble their efforts so that at the close of the work of the twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris at the end of this year, we can achieve tangible and practical results to protect our planet from global warming.

Because peace, security and stability are indispensable factors for development, special and sustained attention should be given to Africa to support it in its efforts aimed at conflict prevention and resolution and peacekeeping. Convinced of that reality, the African Union will organize a high-level event on peace and security on 1 and 2 October 2015, in the context of the commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations.

To conclude, Burkina Faso reiterates its support for the new global development Agenda in the hope that this new covenant will allow us to respond to the pressing needs of our populations.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Anthony Mothae Maruping, Commissioner for Economic Affairs of the African Union Commission.

Mr. Maruping (African Union Commission): I have the singular honour and special privilege to read this statement on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

The African Union Commission recognizes, acknowledges and welcomes the progress made in some areas and notes the lessons learned in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the last 15 years. Africa welcomes the post-2015 development agenda just adopted in the form of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which form the road map towards "the world we want". That Agenda will, in addition, provide the conditions necessary for the completion of the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals.

It was with satisfaction that Africa contributed substantially and influenced the work of the Open Working Group and the intergovernmental negotiation process by submitting a comprehensive and well-articulated common African position. Africa welcomes the new Agenda, which represents a balanced agenda that covers the three principal areas of development that have been identified, namely, the social, economic and sustainability considerations. The continent of Africa was also gratified to host the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which produced the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in July.

Africa is ready to pursue the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals by using the vehicle of the African Union's Agenda 2063, which is a more detailed, more broadly encompassing and longer-term development framework. Agenda 2063, which encapsulates the Sustainable Development Goals, will assist the continent to achieve accelerated, sustained, stable and inclusive economic growth that leads to sound, resilient, sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic development. Agenda 2063 will create jobs, in particular for the currently marginalized sections of society such as women, youth and people living with disabilities, and will address inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth. That should contribute towards the poverty eradication we seek.

Through Agenda 2063, Africa also seeks to structurally transform the economies of its member States by ensuring much higher added value and diversification. That will require, inter alia, particular focus on infrastructure development and energy generation, investment in human development, including education and training, agriculture production improvement, accelerated industrialization, especially in manufacturing, and the provision of relevant services.

Furthermore, accelerated integration and trade, along with enhanced productive capacities, including technology development, transfer and diffusion, should lead to increased competitiveness and productivity, attracting investment and boosting Africa's ability to join regional and international value chains. In addition, Africa has decided to pay special attention to the realization of the vast potential of its blue ocean economy and to put in place measures to sustainably manage the continent's rich biodiversity.

Agenda 2063 is a strategic framework for people-driven development that relies on the potential of the African people, especially women and youth. Gender parity and women's empowerment in all spheres of life and the elimination of all forms of discrimination will be vigorously pursued. High priority will be given to the economic engagement of youth. Women's economic and financial empowerment and youth engagement in economic activities can ensure the mobilization and utilization of all of the human resources and talents available for Africa's accelerated economic growth and socioeconomic development, as well as poverty eradication.

On the social front, Africa will achieve excellence in human-resources capacity development by improving the quality of education and training, by ensuring universal and equitable access to high-quality health care, by providing universal and reliable access to safe water in a sustainable manner, especially access to safe drinking water in urban and rural areas, and by promoting sustainable social protection programmes, among other endeavours. Key concerns will include, inter alia, good governance, adherence to human rights and the skilful management of diversity, peace and security.

Why is Africa so hopeful? Because broad-ranging consultations with stakeholders have been undertaken, ensuring wide ownership and commitment, because the means for financing have received due attention, because risk analysis has been carefully conducted and the relevant management strategies duly devised, because the assessment of the capacities required for implementation of the Agenda has been conducted and modalities for closing capacity gaps have been delineated, because an appropriate accountability framework is being developed, and because the goals, targets and indicators are clear and are being quantified to enable an effective monitoring and evaluation process, which will ensure results-based management.

There is no need to re-emphasize that statistics enable meaningful policy formulation and the articulation of development projects and programmes of action. Statistics also enable the formulation of a credible accountability framework. Without the adequate, reliable and timely statistics management of development programmes, an effective monitoring and evaluation process would be constrained. Strengthening statistics systems is therefore imperative for success in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Against that background and with the cooperation of the international community, Africa should be able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals within the specified period and within the framework of the African Agenda 2063 implementation plans.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Mr. Dmitry Pankin, Chair of the Board of Governors of the Eurasian Development Bank.

Mr. Pankin (Eurasian Development Bank) (*spoke in Russian*): I will not reiterate how important it is that the General Assembly has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (resolution 70/1). It is clearly important, as many of those speaking today have already noted. What remains to be discussed is how we should organize our work in order to achieve the Goals. In other words, we need to identify the practical steps that need to be taken. I wish to note that it is extremely important that the attainment of certain goals should not lead us to undermine other ones, which would create a conflict between the attainment of some goals and the achievement of others.

I will offer one specific example, based on the countries that founded the Eurasian Development Bank after the collapse of the Soviet Union. For 14 years, from 2000 to 2014, the growth of real income compared to labour productivity rose in those countries by two and a half times, while in developed countries, real income during the same period was ahead of the growth in labour productivity by only 11 per cent. In other developing countries, that ratio was around 20 per cent.

What does that mean? On the one hand, it is a good thing; the real income of people in many countries has risen, poverty measures have declined, and the incomes of pensioners and retirees have significantly increased. But the fact that revenue was so far ahead of labour productivity means that those countries became non-competitive, which made them less attractive for investment. That, in turn, meant that the long-term outlook for sustainable development slowed down and was undermined. Therefore, we need to fundamentally redesign our future models of economic development. In that regard, the conclusion that we can draw is that, as we move towards the Sustainable Development Goals, we must do so in a way that does not undermine the attainment of certain goals at the expense of other goals and targets.

I would like now to draw members' attention to another issue. Returning to the development bank that I represent, in recent years, following the financial crisis of 2008, we saw many of the most powerful international banks reduce their operations in the developing world. We saw capital flight from the markets of developing countries towards those of developed countries. Basically, we have witnessed what we call an outflow of quality investment. We therefore face the serious question of who is going to continue to finance the infrastructure projects that are the most important projects in emerging market countries. It is no coincidence that, in that context, we are seeing many projects aimed at the creation of new development banks. What do we see? We see that the countries of the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa group are creating new banks, along with the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, in which China plays the leading role. In those conditions, the most serious and important issue is how to coordinate the work of all those banks.

In my region, the Eurasian area, we now have the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. As I have said, we now have new players coming on the scene, including the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, for instance. The issue of coordinating the work of the banks is fundamental. We see several banks working at the same time on a number of infrastructure projects. We need a single unified approach, along with unified standards, so that the same norms and expectations are applied to the various projects being financed.

What is crucial here, I believe, is the vital role that the United Nations could play, as a body, as an institution, by functioning as the coordinator with regard to organizing the efforts of the various international development banks.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Mr. Saber Chowdhury, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. Chowdhury (Inter-Parliamentary Union): The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) aspire to shape the lives of peoples in each and every country. Never before has the focus on people been so closely interwoven with themes of the planet, peace, prosperity and, last but not least, partnerships. This Summit has thus presented a once in a lifetime opportunity to steer the world towards a safer, sustainable, inclusive and prosperous path. It is my distinct honour as President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the world's organization of parliaments, to thank the General Assembly for the opportunity to address the Assembly, which has now adopted this challenging, ambitious and transformational Agenda.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The world we have known over the past few years is going to change dramatically with the adoption of the SDGs, and we as a parliamentary community are pleased to express our solidarity and full support for the just adopted Sustainable Development Goals. The perspectives of parliaments and parliamentarians from across the world have enriched the formulation and articulation of the SDGs, thanks to the outreach efforts initiated by the United Nations and the resulting global conversations. The IPU is proud to have contributed to that process. We welcome the recognition of the IPU engagement and its contribution to the outcome document that contains the Goals.

In this very Hall earlier this month, speakers of parliaments from around the world held their fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, at which they unanimously adopted a declaration that attests to the strong and growing partnership between the United Nations and the IPU. The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations begins, as we all know, with the words "We the peoples", and parliaments are the institutions that represent the will of the people. It is that common focus on people, their rights, their dignity, their security and their aspirations that bring the United Nations and the IPU together as natural partners. It is that centrality of people and their interests that binds us as legislators to the executive arms of Governments.

The 2 September declaration of the fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments, entitled "Placing democracy at the service of peace and sustainable development: Building the world the people want", will help to galvanize political will and show national ownership, which is critical for the implementation of the new post-2015 development agenda through the active engagement of the parliamentary community. It provides political guidance to parliaments on major issues facing the world today from inequality and poverty to climate change and disaster-risk reduction. It talks about youth disenchantment, migration and terrorism. It reiterates our commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons, which will be marked again tomorrow, 26 September, by the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Those challenges are all interlinked and require coherent and robust action by all States.

In solidarity with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Speakers' declaration pledges to place the concerns of people across the world at the very heart of policymaking. At the Inter-Parliamentary Union, we are particularly heartened by the inclusions of the Goals on governance, women's empowerment and the need to address inequality. Those goals are part of our core business. We note with satisfaction that the governance goal, in particular, points to the need for reform in order to make all institutions of Government, including parliaments, fit for purpose. That goal is a huge political breakthrough. It sends a very strong signal and a very powerful message that we are serious about changing the way we do business at the highest political level, including the core functions of representation, the appropriation of resources through the budgetary process, law-making and oversight, as well as national ownership of global processes. Parliaments have a crucial role to play in translating those goals into reality. Parliaments are thus critical to the success of the Sustainable Development Goals.

To succeed, we must all act together in concert and in a coherent, coordinated manner across political divides. All institutions of Government, as well as other groups in society, such as academia, civil-society organizations, community and religious leaders and youth must work together to ensure effective implementation. Parliaments can make a real difference by fulfilling their constitutional role and mandate in monitoring progress, holding Governments to account and ensuring that we deliver locally what has been pledged globally. Ultimately, it is visionary political leadership that will propel those goals forward and translate them from words into action. As a body of world leaders, the General Assembly has the power to build a better world for our people and for future generations. The IPU and national parliaments are available to help. Together we can shape and create the future that our citizens want and which we have pledged and are duty-bound to deliver.

I wish the Assembly an excellent Summit.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by Mr. Zhang Xinsheng, President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Mr. Zhang Xinsheng (International Union for Conservation of Nature): The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) strongly believes that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), with its Sustainable Development Goals, provides an important framework to address the challenges that we face today, and we commend members for adopting those transformational Goals. The IUCN commends Governments for their open spirit throughout the negotiations and for including the concerns and advice of civil society and other stakeholders. Most of all, we commend them for taking the initiative to jointly agree on a vision for a better future in which no one is left behind and people can live in harmony with nature. Today's adoption is more than just a symbolic act, it is a promise to millions and to all generations. The IUCN has long envisioned sustainable development as a path that leads to a just and prosperous world that values and conserves nature by ensuring, through effective and active governance, that its resources are used sustainably. The 2030 Agenda reflects those wishes.

As the Assembly knows, all life on Earth depends on well-functioning ecosystems. A nation's ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, just adopted today at the United Nations Summit during the opening days of the General Assembly at its seventieth session, depends on a well-functioning ecosystem. If a nation fails to create or can no longer sustain such an ecosystem, it will not be able to make meaningful steps towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the special IUCN high-level international meeting, the Eco-Forum Global, held in China, the declaration adopted at that meeting particularly highlights that, as an organization rooted in nature conservation, the IUCN continues to promote the sustainable use of natural resources. Established in 1948 in Paris, the IUCN is now based in Geneva. The IUCN is particularly delighted to see the manner in which environmental dimensions have been integrated in the SDGs, not only in those Goals specifically dedicated to protecting our natural environment — the land, air and oceans — but also through the inclusion of entities that refer to the role played by nature in our response to current challenges. The latter include poverty, food security, water security and disaster-risk reduction, among others.

The IUCN calls for nature-based solutions to sustainable development issues. Accordingly, the SDGs are an opportunity to address convergent key issues that demonstrate that there can be sustainable development only if we protect the planet and its ecosystems. Given that a supportive functioning ecosystem will help achieve many of the Goals, it is of the utmost importance that we invest our efforts and resources into conserving and restoring such systems.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda provides channels for mobilizing the necessary resources. Some of them, such as redirecting funds away from harmful subsidies towards clean investments, are long overdue. At the national level, development policies need to take into account the role that countries' ecosystems will play in national development and do so in a manner that actively contributes to the implementation and achievements of the SDGs. Investing in nature is investing in people.

While we have spent the past several years talking, discussing, negotiating and agreeing, now we need to shift our attention to implementing our universal Agenda. We have to work together through integrated partnerships across various dimensions. Every State, every person and every stakeholder needs to play their part, in order to ensure the success of this great Agenda. We are ready to act together for a sustainable future.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mr. Martin Kreutner, Dean and Executive Secretary of the International Anti-Corruption Academy.

Mr. Kreutner (International Anti-Corruption Academy): We have all witnessed today history in the making. We have seen the adoption of a comprehensive post-2015 development agenda — the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — in resolution 70/1, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. That new Agenda provides the most consultative and comprehensive path and the most inclusive and illustrated process ever, reaching out to and taking on board all relevant stakeholders, our peoples and the global community.

It is, therefore, a genuine honour for me to be here on this memorable day to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. Let me start by commending the States Members of the United Nations and all of the stakeholders involved; in that connection I pay particular tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, as well as his staff, for his leadership, devotion and dedication. We have come a long way, and we have reached a point today where it is fair to allow ourselves humble feelings of pride.

However, we will all be judged by concrete and tangible results in a world that is entering turbulent times. We face a series of mounting, perhaps unprecedented, global challenges: economic uncertainty, huge numbers of refugees, increasing distrust among the leading Powers and climate change, among others. What is more, we must address those challenges at a time of declining trust in political, institutional and corporate leadership, as well as a time of scepticism about the ability of national and international actors to make the world a better and fairer place.

Therefore, in that context, I would like to talk today about two journeys that the world must take between this Summit and 2030. And I want to urge members to consider how closely interrelated they are. Ideally, there should be a single comprehensive avenue or one compass for actions that sets our trajectory and shines the light on the way forward.

The first involves fulfilling an ambitious and inspiring global Agenda with 17 new SDGs, aimed at securing a better future for all of the human beings on this planet, and the second involves strengthening our efforts to fight corruption everywhere, in all its forms. Let me be clear — this second, anti-corruption journey is not an optional extra. Nor is it a small part of some global policy buffet that one can taste hesitantly and then leave on the plate. On the contrary, a strong, relentless fight against corruption, with leadership from the very top, both nationally and internationally, both in the political but also in the corporate world, is essential for realizing this Sustainable Development Agenda of ours.

Let us look at our record in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There were real achievements in reducing extreme poverty and child mortality and in increasing the numbers of girls going to school, for example. But it is no secret that corruption, at the same time, greatly hampered the fulfilment of the MDGs overall. The good news is that by multiplying our anti-corruption efforts, we can make sure that the SDGs meet with a more fortunate fate. That will be a huge task because we are facing a formidable opponent. Corruption is an evil that knows no boundaries. It is present throughout all continents, all societies and sectors. It costs more than 5 per cent of the global gross domestic product, adding between 5 to 10 per cent to any single contract in business.

Corruption hits the world's most vulnerable people the hardest. Research suggests that in countries where more than 60 per cent of the population pay bribes to receive public services, more women die in childbirth, fewer people have access to clean water and more young people are illiterate. As I have said in many other forums, corruption is the antithesis to human rights, the venom undermining the rule of law, the poison attacking prosperity and development, and the opposite of equity and equality. Most fundamentally, it erodes trust and confidence and contributes to the collapse of societies and economies.

Encouragingly, the global anti-corruption movement has already come a long way since its beginning nearly 20 years ago. Among other regional instruments, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Anti-Bribery Convention came into force in 1999, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, with its global reach, entered into force in 2005. To date, it is the only convention in the United Nations set of conventions that has also implemented a State-owned review mechanism in 2009. There is also a growing awareness, among both political leaders and the public, of corruption's devastating effects.

The International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), the organization that I have the honour to lead, is proud to have actively contributed to the post-2015 development agenda process. We have done so by repeatedly emphasizing the necessity of making good governance and the rule of law, which require strong and stable, fair and just anti-corruption regimes, an explicit component of that process. I am therefore delighted to see strong anti-corruption language in the outcome document for this Summit (resolution 70/1), in particular under Goal 16, which aims to

> "[s]ubstantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms... [d]evelop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels... [and p]romote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all".

Just as encouragingly, the outcome document also recognizes that an inspiring vision needs daily implementation. That is absolutely crucial, if the SDGs are to become a reality. That is where anti-corruption efforts are most needed. The anti-corruption agenda has significantly broadened its perspective since the mid-1990s. Back then, it consisted of a single pillar — criminal law and enforcement. Today, there are three more: prevention, education and awareness-raising, and international cooperation. IACA's activities span all three of those new pillars, empowering anti-corruption professionals across the globe. We are an independent intergovernmental organization with an ever-growing constituency of 64 parties, bringing together more than 5 billion people, or two thirds of the world's population. The International Anti-Corruption Academy is also a post-secondary educational institution that offers technical assistance, capacity-building, world-class anti-corruption programmes and related research.

In July, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 29/11, which explicitly recognized the negative impact of corruption on human rights and sustainable development and the significance of anti-corruption education. In that context, it noted with appreciation the capacity-building activities and specialized curricula developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and IACA, respectively. Nelson Mandela once said that education has the power to change the world. In our context, it is fair to argue that anti-corruption education has the power to help us achieve the SDGs and transform the world or, in the words of Malala Yousafzai, which touched us all this morning, "Education is hope. Education is peace."

I am confident that, if we unite in a spirit of global partnership, the fight against corruption will prevail and the SDGs will become reality, so that we can, as I mentioned at the start of my statement, successfully complete the two journeys via a single path. Investing in anti-corruption education and empowerment is the smart way to work towards achieving sustainable development, safeguarding human rights and strengthening the rule of law on the road to 2030 and beyond. Let us therefore be inspired by the vision of this new Agenda, and be energized and focused in our daily efforts. On behalf of the International Anti-Corruption Academy and on a personal note, I pledge my full support to this Summit and to the successful implementation of the SDGs.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Mr. Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. As Sy (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, I would like to thank the Assembly for the opportunity to address this historic Summit. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) is ambitious, universal, holistic and more inclusive. We are pleased with the emphasis it places on the most vulnerable and marginalized. We also welcome the strong focus on resilience, which recognizes that disasters, humanitarian crises and global health epidemics have the potential to reverse hard-won development gains. Those issues, as well as those of forced displacement, migration, violence, peace and human rights and human dignity, must be addressed if we are to achieve sustainable development.

An estimated 250 million people are now being affected by humanitarian crises. We are seeing an increase in the intensity, frequency and unpredictability of disasters, often exacerbated by climate change and unplanned urbanization. Over the past two years, we have been reminded yet again of the threat posed by international health emergencies, which are critically exacerbated by underdeveloped health sectors. Tens of millions of people are affected by conflicts that are becoming more and more protracted, stretching the capacity and imagination of humanitarian organizations. There are an estimated 60 million forcibly displaced people, half of whom are children. That is the highest level since the end of the Second World War. In recent weeks, we have been at many of the borders in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa and have seen at first hand the terrible human toll on refugees and a migrant crisis that is testing our capacity to respond and, more important, our shared humanity in the face of so much suffering. If we are to truly leave no one behind, then the new post-2015 agenda must address the needs of people affected by humanitarian crises.

The ambitious 2030 Agenda must be backed by resources and commitments, and not least by financial resources. As the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have said, we must go from billions to trillions if we are to have any hope of delivering on the promises we are making today. In order to do that, we will have to scale up our ambitions and diversify our sources of funding. Moreover, more resources must be aimed at the local level, where the needs are greatest and services can be delivered to the most vulnerable and hardest to reach. Through their trained staff and 17 million volunteers, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are permanently present in communities and work across a continuum of development and humanitarian settings to serve the most vulnerable. That unparalleled presence is enhanced by the auxiliary status that our national societies possess vis-à-vis their Governments, and is complemented by the solidarity and universality of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Our Movement is uniquely and powerfully placed to drive meaningful and sustainable change at the community level by building and strengthening resilience.

We are happy to endorse the 2030 Agenda, and our network stands ready to partner with Governments, United Nations agencies, civil society, the corporate sector and, not least, communities themselves in order to make this ambition a reality.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Ms. Michaëlle Jean, Secretary General of the International Organization of la Francophonie.

Ms. Jean (International Organization of la Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): At this seventieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations, the year 2015 will go down in history as one of major events, commitments and hopes for humankind. In March, in this Hall, we undertook a review of the commitment made 20 years ago in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women to eradicate unjustifiable inequalities between women and men. In May, at Incheon, we committed to ensuring an equitable, quality education and lifelong learning for all. In July, at Addis Ababa, we committed to revitalizing global partnerships and mobilizing the financing and investment needed for development.

The International Organization of la Francophonie was represented at all those events and has endorsed all the resulting commitments, because with its 80 States and Governments, scattered over five continents, it is at the centre of every emergency around the globe, all the world's inequalities, terrible disparities, security crises and continuing and recurring bloody conflicts. But it is also at the centre of all that this world has to offer in terms of energy, achievement, extraordinary diversity and an infinite capacity to make, produce, create, innovate and invent.

So, yes, the International Organization of la Francophonie is firmly committed to our ambitious post-2015 development agenda. In order to give substance to that new hope, we will work with the most vulnerable of our member countries to help them take advantage of the opportunities presented by the prospects of improved financing for development, in line with the Addis Ababa International Conference on Financing for Development, and to support them in the sometimes complex process of formulating national strategies for sustainable development.

And, yes, the International Organization of la Francophonie will continue to work actively to ensure that in a few weeks' time we reach an ambitious and lasting settlement in Paris. The work we have done with the Institute for Sustainable Development of la Francophonie to strengthen the capacities of negotiating teams from highly vulnerable countries, particularly in Africa, is part of that effort. The work we have done to ensure that multilingualism is a reality in those negotiations will also enable everyone's voice to be genuinely heard and taken into account. That is important, because the fate of every country on the planet is at stake. It is an issue of international democracy and a principle that we will do everything to defend.

The International Organization of la Francophonie is committed to all those efforts in an acute awareness of our interdependence. There are no more local challenges, tragedies or threats. We must therefore respond to this globalization of our problems by globalizing our decisions, solutions, solidarity and partnerships. States have their own responsibility to achieve these goals, and they should be well aware that they will have to be more and more accountable to their increasingly engaged citizens, civil society and young people. And so much the better.

But we also have a collective responsibility, through international, regional and non-governmental organizations and private companies. Every effort, every repository of knowledge, expertise and financial resources — and they are important — must make a contribution to our shared strategies, with their sole expected and declared aim being the realization of the common good. The International Organization of la Francophonie is committed to those efforts, too, in an acute awareness of their urgency and of the fact that time is short.

It would be a grave mistake to believe that we have 15 years in which to get this done, because every day the consequences of the inaction, selfishness, indifference and irresponsibility of recent years are added to the goals we have set in 2015. Yes, to the goals we have set today we must add the consequences of the conflicts we have allowed to metastasize, sometimes after starting them, conflicts now seen in terms of the hundreds of thousands of refugees they have produced and the kilometres soaked with blood gained every day by terrorist movements seeking lands. Yes, to the goals we have set we must add the consequences of the poverty to which we have turned a blind eye too long and which now includes hundreds of thousands of migrants.

So this is urgent and time is short. We must take concrete steps, immediately and now. We should not be content to manage these consequences piecemeal. Let us act resolutely to tackle their causes. That is the choice that the International Organization of la Francophonie has made. We want to go faster and further. Besides our work in education and training in the areas of peace, democracy and human rights, we have adopted an economic strategy that, in the spirit of the post-2015 agenda, puts the emphasis on economic growth and employment, particularly for women and young people — the women whose contribution to development and prosperity is invaluable and indispensable, and the young people who in 2030 will make up more than half of many countries' populations and who are so eager to work and succeed. All they are asking is to be able to regain their hope and confidence. It is for them that we are launching an incubation programme in Africa for regionally focused, job-creating businesses.

The fact that this is so urgent means that the more of us there are taking part — countries, private and institutional partners, and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes — the better will be our chances of winning this race against time. We must play as a team to bring home this and every other victory. We are at a crossroads. Whatever actions and decisions we do or do not take will have irreversible consequences and repercussions for the future of our shared planet. Let us prove that we can truly give meaning to our words of compassion and humanism and our ambitious, hopeful resolutions through a sense of a duty done, because our duty begins now.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Mr. Badre Eddine Allali, Under-Secretary-General for Social Affairs of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Allali (League of Arab States) (*spoke in Arabic*): The League of Arab States is pleased to be able to participate in this historic Summit and support every effort of its members aimed at achieving comprehensive sustainable development. We all suffer from the effects of conflict, leaving aside the Syrian crisis itself and Israel's inhumane practices, which hinder the development and security of the Palestinian people.

The League of Arab States commends the General Assembly's decision to raise the flag of the State of

Palestine in front of United Nations Headquarters. That is an important and major step that will contribute to the achievement of our shared goal.

The League of Arab States, in cooperation with its member States, its specialized agencies and its Ministerial Council, started to prepare for the Agenda for Sustainable Development as early as 2012. At the various summits held by the League of Arab States in 2013, 2014 and 2015, the League adopted important resolutions aimed at setting priorities in the framework of this new development Agenda.

Achieving this important Agenda is a demonstration of Arab political will at the highest level. We would like to thank the United Nations, its specialized agencies, the United Nations Development Group and the Regional Coordination Mechanism for all of their efforts to help forge an Arab position in the negotiations led by the Arab Group in cooperation with friendly and brotherly groups.

The League of Arab States will continue to coordinate action with its member States. In March 2015, the League adopted a decision to hold a ministerial conference on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab States. This is the first such conference to be held at the ministerial level with the participation of all ministries concerned. It is aimed at forging an Arab action plan aimed at implementing the Agenda, which is considered an Arab priority.

The challenges facing us are tremendous. It is important, therefore, to foster international cooperation aimed at implementing this ambitious plan. This will witout a doubt have a positive effect on the Arab world. We have a strong focus on promoting the role played by Arab youth, because they are major contributors to achieving development.

In conclusion, we would once again express our heartfelt appreciation to all of those who have taken it upon themselves to support sustainable development in the Arab world. We wish the Summit every success.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Ms. Brenda Killen, Deputy Director of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Ms. Killen (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development): I am very pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Mr. Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

It is a privilege to participate in this historic event as we chart a more inclusive and sustainable future for all. We have set ambitious goals, but they can be achieved. We are not starting from scratch. The Millennium Development Goals helped to lift more than 1 billion people out of extreme poverty. Now we have agreed that in less than 800 weeks we will lift the remaining 800 million people out of extreme poverty.

It is a job for everyone. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) apply to every person in every society, in every country, rich or poor.

The OECD can and will help make progress relevant to all people, no matter where they live. Our broad range of policy expertise and our partnerships with more than 100 countries, as well as numerous non-State actors, can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Pioneering OECD work on well-being resonates with the vision embodied in the SDGs, going beyond economic growth to look at other essential dimensions of progress.

To achieve the SDGs, we must create synergies across policy areas and reconcile difficult policy trade-offs. Nowhere is this more evident than in our efforts to tackle climate change. For too long, our economies have depended on fossil fuels. This must end, and it must end soon.

Earlier this year, the OECD worked with the International Energy Agency, the Nuclear Energy Agency and the International Transport Forum to help put a comprehensive diagnosis on the table. Our report, "Aligning Policies for a Low-Carbon Economy", shows how policies in areas as diverse as tax, trade and transport are often inconsistent and poorly aligned with our climate objectives. This is just one example of the OECD's contribution to the global evidence base, which must inform deliberations at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

When it comes to financing the Sustainable Development Goals, official development assistance will remain a crucial source of funding for development, especially for the poorest and most fragile countries. The OECD will continue to shine a spotlight on its members' efforts as they work to fulfil their responsibilities. We will hold them to account for the commitments made.

We will also need far greater volumes of private investment and much smarter investment. The OECD's Policy Framework for Investment is already helping more than 30 developing and emerging economies stimulate investment, create jobs, spur innovation and link local enterprises with global value chains.

The OECD is supporting the global fight against tax evasion and illicit financial flows through the OECD/Group of 20 base erosion and profit-shifting project, and by working with the 126 members of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes to increase transparency on tax issues. Together with the United Nations Development Programme, we are helping to build tax audit capacity in developing countries through our joint initiative, Tax Inspectors Without Borders.

As we look beyond financing to the substance of some of the challenges ahead, the OECD is already actively engaged in the development of a new urban agenda in preparation for the third United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, next year. In the area of education, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is already helping to monitor progress towards the aim of ensuring basic skills for all in more than 70 countries. The OECD's PISA for Development initiative promises to increase our understanding of how children learn, teachers teach and school systems operate in developing countries, making a tangible contribution to the monitoring and achievement of a new education and learning goal. Our work on water governance and financing promises to make a tangible contribution to SDG 6.

Far-reaching follow-up and review will be essential to incentivize action and learning around the 2030 Agenda. This will depend on robust data to pinpoint needs and capture progress at the global, regional, national and local levels. OECD data and evidence-based analyses touch on all of the 17 goals. Meanwhile, PARIS21, an OECD-hosted partnership, is helping developing countries to harness the data revolution.

Partnerships are in the OECD's DNA. We host and support a diversity of partnerships on a vast range of topics. Our joint work with the United Nations to support the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation has created a dynamic community of practice on development issues, and our Development Centre continues to grow, welcoming China as a member earlier this year.

The international system works best when it works together. We were privileged to welcome His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon to the OECD earlier this year, in the first-ever visit of a serving United Nations Secretary-General to the organization. Our partnership with the United Nations family is stronger than ever before. The OECD is committed to working with the United Nations and for the United Nations.

Looking ahead, countries will need a GPS — a tool for piecing together evidence, for triangulating where they stand and for guiding them on the journey ahead. The OECD stands ready to help design, build and deliver the instrument that countries need to help turn commitments into actions, and to demonstrate tangible progress towards the SDGs. The OECD's range of measurements, country assessments and peer-review and peer-learning mechanisms can contribute to that effort, including through the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

The OECD exists to help promote better policies for better lives. The SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offer an unparalleled opportunity to fulfil that purpose, lending support on every level to those ambitious but achievable goals.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Ms. Fang Liu (International Civil Aviation Authority): It is a tremendous honour for me to address this plenary meeting of the General Assembly as the newly-appointed Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). ICAO welcomes the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). I am certain that it will contribute greatly to our common goals and support the eradication of poverty in all its forms.

As a United Nations specialized agency established 70 years ago, ICAO has been mandated to promote the development of a safe, secure and sustainable global civil-aviation system, which can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world. ICAO's current strategic objectives are strongly linked to 13 of the 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda, demonstrating our full commitment to their implementation. In that regard, I wish to bring to this meeting's attention the important role of aviation as a powerful engine for economic and social development throughout the world.

Air transport has grown significantly. It began with a flight of just 34 kilometres, but in today's world aircraft travel well over 10 million times that distance in a single year — the equivalent of travelling from the Earth to Venus. Today, aviation is by far the world's fastest, safest and most efficient mode of mass transportation. Aviation currently moves more than half of the 1.1 billion tourists who travel across international borders each year, a figure that rises to over 80 per cent in various small island States. It also transports some 35 per cent of the world's trade by value. Moreover, aviation has directly contributed to the creation of 8.5 million jobs and has added around $700 billion to the global gross domestic product (GDP). Because of its cross-cutting nature and multiple links to other economic sectors, the total economic impact of aviation is linked with around 3.5 per cent of world GDP, equivalent to $2.4 trillion, and with the creation of 55.1 million jobs.

More importantly, aviation can transform lives and societies by connecting the world, allowing access to new technologies and opening global markets for rural producers. Aviation is also well appreciated for its role in carrying life-saving medicines to communities in need, in bringing disaster relief and in reducing poverty through all of the economic factors that I have already outlined.

For landlocked developing countries and small island developing States especially, aviation represents an essential lifeline that enhances connectivity, which in turn promotes greater tourism, trade and other vital business activities. We may recall that the economic damage caused by the disruption of air connectivity after the 25 April earthquake in Nepal has been estimated at $1 million per day. A one-day shutdown of air transport worldwide would cost approximately $60 million.

Going forward, ICAO has been proactively working with the international community to address the challenges posed by rapidly expanding air traffic, which is now projected to double by 2030. To foster that projected growth in a sustainable manner and produce inclusive and productive employment, aviation must have coherent policies with the tourism, trade and other transport sectors to further improve connectivity and modernize infrastructure. Those measures alone could nearly double aviation's share of global GDP to $5.8 trillion by 2030. Upgrading air-traffic systems, for example, would contribute an estimated $300 billion per year to the global economy, and at the same time would produce significant environmental benefits.

In that regard, I would like to congratulate all States on the ground-breaking Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and ICAO will continue its support to the new initiatives, in particular the establishment of a global infrastructure forum. ICAO has launched a No Country Left Behind campaign to better identify and coordinate assistance to needy States so that they can foster sustainable local and regional prosperity and fully benefit from the improvement in their air connectivity.

In addition to our strong and ongoing commitment, ICAO, as an official observer on the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, has proposed global indicators under SDG Goals 8 and 9. In close cooperation with States and international partners and consistent with the visions of the SDGs and the ICAO's No Country Left Behind goals, our organization continues to lead the development and implementation of a coherent and harmonized global regulatory framework for a safe and secure air-transport operation.

The ability of the world air-transport network to safely manage 100,000 daily flights to every corner of the world has always been dependent on upon how successfully States can cooperate to their common benefit. ICAO is privileged to be able to cooperate with States and all of their organizations on the adoption and realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Mr. José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Mr. Da Silva (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations): I would like to start by congratulating the General Assembly on having adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). We have given ourselves an enormous task that begins with the historic commitment of not only reducing, but also eradicating, poverty, hunger and malnutrition in a sustainable way. The new Agenda clearly recognizes the centrality of food security, nutrition and sustainable agricultural development, but the full range of Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved without rapid progress in eliminating hunger and malnutrition by 2030. We have made progress over the past 15 years, but we still have many challenges ahead.

The number of hungry people has dropped by more than 200 million since 1990, and 73 developing countries out of the 120 monitored by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have met the Millennium Development Goal hunger target. But much more needs to be done. Nearly 800 million people continue to suffer chronic hunger. That is unacceptable. We can rest only when we achieve zero hunger. To do so, we must invest and responsibly respond to the needs of the world's poor population, and promote inclusive growth. Agricultural and rural development are central to that effort, as over 70 per cent of the world's poor and food-insecure live in rural areas of developing countries.

It is clear that we need to build more sustainable agricultural and food systems that are resilient to stresses and better able to cope with and respond to the impacts of climate change. But let me add that investing in sustainable development is crucial, but not enough. Ending hunger and poverty also needs well-designed social protection systems. The combination of productive support and social protection is the only way to ensure the food and nutrition security of the poorest hungry. The three Rome-based agencies have estimated the additional investment needed to end hunger — only $160 per year per person living in extreme poverty in the next 15 years. This represents less than 0.5 per cent of global income in 2014, and it is only a small fraction of the cost that hunger and malnutrition impose on our societies.

We have an enormous task ahead of us, but one that we can tackle successfully if we work together. FAO has supported the post-2015 development agenda, and we will continue to be part of that effort, supporting Governments and working with non-State actors to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Now is the time to unite our forces to realize the future we want.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Mr. Kituyi (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development): I feel honoured to stand before members of the Assembly today at this historic Summit on behalf of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as we meet to ratify the most comprehensive plan of action for global development that we have witnessed in the 70 years of existence of the United Nations.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) is a bold, inclusive and collective vision for transforming the world we live in to achieve the future we all want. I take great personal satisfaction in the fact that the Agenda before us offers a universal consensus on dignity for all, a better planet for all, and prosperity for all. These are all close to the founding vision of the organization I lead.

As we all know, the international community functions at its best when the relevant actors complement rather than compete with each another. With the historic agreement on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), I am pleased that the central role that trade and development plays in sustainable development has been recognized. I assure everyone that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development stands ready to make a lasting contribution to ending extreme poverty and shifting our global economy to a low-carbon future.

We at UNCTAD are uniquely appreciative of the trust that the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda place in our 50 years of expertise and experience. The challenge before us now is to turn from decisions to actions, from negotiations to implementation. The role of UNCTAD and the entire United Nations development system has been strengthened in the financing for development process and with the SDG means of implementation. At UNCTAD, we are already supporting members in preparing to monitor and ensure accountability over some 50 SDG targets.

For all of us in the United Nations system, the scale at which we operate and the efficiency with which we deliver must now achieve new synergies and resonance with the Agenda before us. Let us make no mistake about it — achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will require a massive investment push over the next 15 to 20 years into a broader set of sectors and industries than we have ever seen undertaken on a global scale. At UNCTAD, we have calculated that in developing countries alone there is an unmet need of $2.5 trillion annually. Yet today, the gloomy state of the world economy imperils the chances for such an investment push. The slow pace of growth in global trade has us on track for the slowest period of trade expansion since the end of the Second World War. That is unacceptable and incompatible with the enabling environment necessary to achieve the SDG targets.

The least developed countries (LDCs) will be the testing ground for the SDGs. The LDCs will make or break the SDG Agenda. If the SDGs are to be met, massive needs must be met, particularly in investment and infrastructure. That makes it all the more worrisome that the world economy today, notably in emerging markets, is in a much more uncertain state than it was even six months ago, let alone six years ago, when we had begun to hope the worst of the financial crisis was behind us.

Growth in emerging economies is what carries the MDGs, not just because of poverty reduction in emerging markets themselves, but also because of the sustained commodity boom that it fuels across all developing regions. Turning today's more uncertain growth prospects into tomorrow's SDG achievements raises the bar much higher for all countries, especially for the LDCs, precisely at a time when the developing world is facing growing risks from market turmoil, human suffering and violent conflict.

But cooperation among peoples of all nations is most important in the darkest hours. It is my belief that the SDGs can reinvigorate the ambitions of international cooperation, and within our own sphere of expertise UNCTAD will help accomplish that aim. We have the tools needed to generate the massive push of investment needed to leave no one behind and to invigorate our multilateral spirit. And as we now turn to the actions needed to achieve the SDGs, I am confident that we can undertake those efforts with the same degree of ambition as we have committed ourselves today.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Ms. Marie-Paule Roudil, Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in New York and Representative to the United Nations.

Ms. Roudil (UNESCO) (*spoke in French*): It is a real honour for me to address the General Assembly on behalf of Ms. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO.

(*spoke in English*)

This is a historic moment. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) charts a new course to tackle challenges facing all States. It is the result of unprecedented consultation with Governments and civil society across the world. It is indeed an Agenda of the people, by the people and for the people.

We have a bold road map; now we embark on a great collective journey. To succeed, we must remain guided by the moral compass that has been at the heart of the United Nations for 70 years. The human rights and dignity of every woman and man are the starting point for all action and the measure of success. The 2030 Agenda was crafted using new methods; its implementation must be equally innovative and transformative. To succeed, we must nurture the power of every development multiplier, every accelerator of inclusion, poverty eradication and sustainability.

We all are called upon to contribute to that universal agenda with all means available. UNESCO is fully committed, through its normative work, upstream policy dialogue, capacity-building, inclusive partnerships and its field work. That calls for new, sustained and well-targeted financing, including from domestic sources, new and effective implementation arrangements and new multi-stakeholder partnerships.

That is the importance of education, as a human right, a force for gender equality and a transformative power for society. Sustainable Development Goal 4 sets out a new framework, focusing on the quality of education, lifelong learning, skills, teaching, education for sustainable development and global citizenship. Drawing on the Incheon Declaration, UNESCO is crafting an education 2030 framework for action to take that forward. That is true for science as well. The 2030 Agenda, with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, calls for new efforts to build robust national science, technology and innovation policies and systems to facilitate the transfer of technology and solutions — including for the sustainable management of water and the ocean — to which UNESCO is fully committed.

(*spoke in French*)

For the first time, the 2030 Agenda acknowledges the power of culture and cultural diversity as an engine of sustainable development. It is a historic opportunity to give life to our main renewable resource for innovation and participation of peoples. We must enhance the capacities of countries to collect reliable and transparent data in order to understand the mechanisms of development and enhance the effectiveness of investments. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics has valuable assets available to all. The involvement of all stakeholders through free, independent and pluralistic media must be the guiding principle of the implementation of the new programme. Freedom of expression, including access and free circulation of information are a means of improving governance, enhancing the rule of law and promoting respect for human rights, which leverage sustainability.

The challenges are huge, but the possibilities are equally so. UNESCO is determined to put its all at the service of this programme, and believes that education, science, culture, communication and information comprise the "soft power" that the world needs to do away with poverty and build a dignified future for everybody.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Ms. Jan Beagle, Deputy Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

Ms. Beagle (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS): Let us imagine, 15 years from now, a world where every young person has access to high-quality secondary education, and where policies and legislation for gender-equality protect and empower women and girls. We have substantially increased the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix. The poor have access to financial services and markets and road-traffic deaths have been cut in half. The AIDS epidemic is over and with it a tremendous tide of suffering and loss of life have come to an end. Twenty-eight million HIV infections and 21 million AIDS-related deaths have been averted, while investment and a robust response have accrued $3.2 trillion in economic benefits.

That is the world we have committed to today. Now it is our responsibility to support the people on the front lines of development with the means of implementation to realize the commitments made. Fortunately, we have a head start. From the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, people living with HIV demanded change on a transformative scale. People affected by the epidemic rejected the status quo and worked across Governments, academia, science, civil society and the private sector to bring life-saving medicines to people all over the world at affordable prices.

Four years ago, the international community committed to getting 15 million people on HIV treatment by 2015. Sceptics said it would be impossible. They said that the barriers to progress were too high, but they were wrong. That goal was achieved. Between 2000 and 2014, the world has seen a 35 per cent decrease in new HIV infections, and AIDS-related deaths have plummeted by 42 per cent. The trajectory of the epidemic has been changed. Today we can hold our heads high and say we can keep promises and we can deliver ahead of time because every life matters. But the job is not done, and there is no place for complacency.

Today the General Assembly has committed to ending the AIDS epidemic as a public-health threat by 2030. Science proves it is achievable. We have the tools and knowledge to make it happen. To get there, we must fast-track the AIDS response now: strengthening combination prevention programmes, tackling stigma and discrimination in all its forms, and reaching the 90-90-90 HIV treatment milestone by 2020. We must create a world where all people enjoy their full range of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. Laws, policies and practices in all countries must protect the rights of key populations.

UNAIDS, which is itself a multisectoral partnership, is proud to be one of the first of the United Nations organizations to align its strategy with the SDGs. Next month, the UNAIDS Board will adopt a new strategy that will build on the knowledge that the journey to end AIDS demands integrated action across the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development, as set out in the SDGs.

That is why UNAIDS is a champion for the entire agenda. The high-level meeting of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS to be held in 2016 will provide the opportunity for Member States to recommit at the highest political level to a robust AIDS response and means for achieving SDG target 3.3. As the global community sets out on this journey to implement the SDGs, let us reinvigorate the passion that fuelled the AIDS movement. Let us expand that energy to ignite a movement for social, economic and environmental justice that places people at the centre and ensures the well-being of all. Nothing less will do.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by Ms. Susan Hopgood, President of Education International.

Ms. Hopgood (Education International): I am proud to be representing the world's trade union movement at this defining moment. The trade union movement's very reason for being is to combat and end poverty; reduce inequalities; to achieve decent work, social protection and women's rights; protect public services and infrastructure; and improve fiscal and wage policies. Too often, we have been leading where our Governments have fallen short.

"Ambitious", "comprehensive" and "unprecedented" are just a few of the words we have heard describing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, for the very first time, the world is going on record calling for free quality primary and secondary education for all, with qualified teachers in a safe environment. Future generations will thank us for keeping the promises we are making today.

But now comes an even more difficult task — reaching those goals. Where the SDGs are lacking is in the commitments to implementing the goals through financing and progressive public policy, as well as a sound accountability framework — deeds, not words. It is obvious to us that the current means of implementation fall short. Commitments are not real unless they are binding; public interest is not protected if the private sector has unconditional access to public resources. The enabling environment needed to achieve the SDGs must include tax justice, including progressive taxation; strong public health, water and sanitation systems; and free quality education.

We have goals before us that are designed for consensus, and that is remarkable. Let us move very quickly to add the structures that will show the world that those goals are also designed for success. Decent work, social protection and social dialogue are integral means and ends to achieving the new Agenda. Social dialogue that brings together social partners, employers and workers' organizations is an excellent example of ownership of policy processes at the national level. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are key if the partnership is to work. As trade unions, we are committed to playing our part. We need Governments to step up to fulfil their obligations — deeds, not words.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by Ms. Sylvia Beales, representative of HelpAge International.

Ms. Beales (HelpAge International): I am here to speak about ageing and older persons. My name is Sylvia Beales. I am 60 years old. I work with HelpAge International, a global network in all regions of the world. Working together with the Stakeholder Group on Ageing, we represent 800 million older women and men worldwide.

We congratulate the General Assembly on embedding age in the goals and targets of the post-2015 agenda. We especially commend the pledge to leave no one behind. We look to the Assembly to ensure that those promises are kept. We call on the Assembly to count us in. Counting everyone from birth to death and reaching the farthest first means embracing all of us, young and old, as partners. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu has said:

> "I want to tell the world that I count, that older people everywhere count, that people of all ages should be included in the Sustainable Development Goals".

All of us in this Hall and beyond are ageing. We all want to age well in safety and with dignity. We want the same for our children, so it is right that the SDGs take ageing and older persons into account. The speed and scale of ageing must be responded to. I offer some facts. Today, two people reach the age of 60 every second. Every three seconds, there is a new case of dementia in the world. By 2030, 16 per cent of the world's population will be over 60. Women over 50 already make up a quarter of the world's women. Almost 47 per cent of those over 65 live with disabilities. Those over 60 account for three-quarters of deaths caused by non-communicable disease.

Even though ageing is happening fastest in the developing world, basic requirements for living well in later life do not exist. The lack of regular income blights the lives of millions. Only one in four persons has a pension in middle- and low-income countries, and loans for business are denied on the basis of age. Older women are invisible victims of appalling abuse and violence. They experience the dual impact of age and gender discrimination. They have less access to education and health services; they have lower earning capacity and restricted access to land ownership.

We older people fear — with reason — poor health, illness and poor care. Just two weeks ago, here at the United Nations, 78-year-old Esther told us about the death of her 75-year-old husband in his wheelchair after being forced to wait for over five hours in a hospital queue to see a doctor. She said that was not unusual, and she despaired over older people's invisibility and exclusion.

Ageing is both an opportunity and a challenge in our ambition to leave no one behind. We have a few recommendations for the Assembly.

First, we must recognize that population ageing is a success; it is not a burden. It is a triumph of humanity and of development. We should celebrate ageing, not fear it. Secondly, in their national planning, Member States should analyse, prepare for and invest in population ageing and in older people. Thirdly, Member States must create and finance programmes that address the needs of older persons and protect our human rights. This means ending age discrimination, eradicating poverty in old age, and ensuring decent health care, pensions, opportunities for jobs and life-long learning. Fourthly, we would like to see Member States integrate us as essential stakeholders in the national, regional and global mechanisms set up to implement the sustainable development framework.

We call on Member States to invest now and build capacity to fill the gaps on missing data. Comparable poverty data on old age is missing for 93 countries, especially those in Africa. Data sets that impose age limits of 49 or 64 years of age are not fit for purpose. Those age limits mean that violence against older women goes unrecorded.

Ageism must end now, once and for all. In the words of Archbishop Tutu, once again: "As we get older, our rights do not change. As we get older, we are no less human and should not become invisible." Please count us in.

The meeting rose at 11.20 p.m.

United Nations A/70/PV.7

General Assembly

Seventieth session

Official Records

7th plenary meeting
Saturday, 26 September 2015, 9 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lykketoft .... (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 9.05 a.m.

High-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly

Agenda items 15 and 116 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Nauru.

Mr. Baron Divavesi Waqa, President of the Republic of Nauru, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Waqa: I congratulate Mr. Lykketoft on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. I take this opportunity to also recognize the excellent stewardship of the President of the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, Mr. Sam Kutesa, in recommending "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" for adoption (resolution 70/1).

We further convey our appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his leadership and vision of the post-2015 development as one that embraces a life of dignity for all and insists on leaving no one behind. This vision has contributed to the success of Agenda 2030.

As one of the smallest Members of the United Nations family, we are of the view that leaving no one behind is a powerful tenet for the new Agenda and a bedrock for the paradigm shift we look to achieve in the next 15 years. On this point, I call on the United Nations to recognize the right of the Government of the Republic of China on Taiwan, one of our long-standing development partners to be included and involved in the implementation of this universal Agenda. The Republic of China on Taiwan has played a key leadership role in the development of our Pacific region, and we should not leave it behind.

We must get universality right, and universality does not mean a uniform approach. It must fit the purpose, whether addressing the challenges faced by the largest or smallest among us. This means fundamentally changing the way we think and act. We must consider the 2030 Agenda holistically, rather than look at each issue in isolation. Failing to achieve some of our lofty Goals can undermine or prevent the achievement of others.

In this regard, we remain alarmed at the lack of ambitious actions by our developed partners and the international community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change remains one of the greatest challenges of our time and will continue to pose an existential threat to our island and undermine our efforts to achieve our sustainable development. We therefore insist on reaching a legally binding agreement

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in Paris that is guided by a long-term temperature-rise goal of well below 1.5° Celsius and consistent with our vision for a safe and secure world for us all.

Living on a vulnerable small island, we often experience the consequences of global decisions more severely than others and so can see more clearly on which the path international inaction is setting us. This further exposes us to the growing risks of climate-related disasters, and we will require targeted and sustained support to establish risk-informed development. For this reason, we are excited by the United Nations Development Programme's flagship 5-10-50 initiative, which aims at building our resilience in the face of disasters, and we would be interested in participating as one of the 50 countries for that programme. Moreover, we should ensure that our development remains risk-informed and sustainable.

Nauru, with the support of Pacific small island developing States, advocated for a dedicated sustainable development goal on oceans and seas. There is no sustainable development without healthy, productive and resilient oceans. This is, of course, a critical environmental imperative, but there are vital economic and social reasons that are deeply embedded and go to the heart of whether we will be able to develop or not.

For my country, the ocean is the source of almost all development possibilities. Unlike larger countries, we do not have a diversified portfolio of industries. Phosphate mining and fishing constitute the bulk of economic opportunities, along with less than a handful of other sources of income. It is for those reasons that we are pleased that oceans have a central role in the 2030 Agenda and that the need to increase benefits to small island developing States from the sustainable use of marine resources is specifically included.

The Sustainable Development Goals are an opportunity to improve the quality of life for our peoples. However, we need to empower our peoples to be active participants in their own development. Institution-building at the national level is critical. In addition, we need to create an environment that is conducive to providing equality and justice for our peoples — one that respects human rights and ensures the effective rule of law and good governance at all levels.

On the practical level, we need to embark on a prompt and comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda as soon as it takes effect on 1 January 2016. An early acceleration period would support our efforts to integrate the SDGs into our national and regional priorities.

We need to transform the way we do things — business as usual is no longer sufficient if we wish to achieve a sustainable future. As we recommit ourselves and undertake to be good partners in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we must ensure that our efforts are matched by a spirit of trust, mutual respect and equal partnership. We therefore call on our development partners to honour their official development assistance commitments, facilitate the transfer of technology and mobilize the necessary resources, in order to support us in realizing the 2030 Agenda.

In this endeavour, the Assembly has the full assurance and support of the Government and people of Nauru and can rely on its commitment to action. God bless the Republic of Nauru and God bless the United Nations.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President of the Republic of Nauru for his statement.

Mr. Baron Divavesi Waqa, President of the Republic of Nauru, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Sovereign Prince of Monaco.

His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco was escorted to the rostrum.

Prince Albert (*spoke in French*): Encouraged by the remarkable progress achieved under the Millennium Development Goals yet alarmed by the scale of the new challenges posed by threat of climate change, we are celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations by adopting the most holistic and transformative undertaking in the history of the Organization. In so doing, we have the expectation that a new ethos of responsibility, marked by solidarity, will unite us for the next 15 years.

In establishing the Sustainable Development Goals, we are restoring the connection that takes us back to our origins, our cultures and our humanity. As the children of one Earth and a single ocean, where life first began, we embrace once again our common destiny. The future of humankind cannot be conceived in isolation from the future of the planet. That inescapable fact brings us back to basics and reminds us of the inestimable value of the natural resources and biodiversity that are essential to human life but that we have put in jeopardy.

We recognize the urgent need to correct our excesses, which have exacerbated the depletion of the planet's resources, while at the same time coping with the demands of a constantly increasing world population. Over the past century and a half, we have neglected the Earth and the oceans, those fertile and life-giving sources that are indispensable to sustainable prosperity.

Empowered by our experiences and the lessons of the past, let us resist the urge to get caught up in the heat of the moment, and let us ensure that the twenty-first century is a century of education, social justice, respect for the rule of law and human rights, which are the cornerstones of peace. Let us move on from virtual models of societies to actual model societies.

My determination in endorsing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) stems from my deep convictions and personal experiences. The actions of my country are based on its long tradition of openness to the world and of sharing with the most vulnerable, particularly women and children. When partnering with civil society, we have always aimed at promoting a harmonious development that will combat the tyranny of poverty, and at restoring the dignity of those left behind and of the victims of conflicts, extremism and natural disasters in their ever-increasing numbers.

Monaco has made it its duty to adapt to the challenges of sustainable urban development. We have opted for ecologically rational solutions, particularly in the areas of transportation and energy efficiency, giving priority to quality-of-life issues and green space development. Our goal is a 50 per cent reduction in the 1990s levels of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

In 15 years, three quarters of the world population will live in urban areas, and the majority of young people will be concentrated in developing countries. Monaco is committed to continuing its youth mobilization effort and offering young people the opportunities they need in order to succeed, thereby ensuring that they contribute to our countries' growth.

I am delighted that the role of sport in promoting sustainable development was acknowledged in the 2030 Agenda, for — as many present here know — I attach a great deal of importance to the values embodied in sport and in the Olympic spirit. Today, sport for development and peace plays an integral role in the progress of all countries. Sport brings people together, offers wholesome alternatives to other activities and educates. It teaches respect and tolerance and provides opportunities to give of one's very best — qualities that can only inspire individuals and peoples to excel as they seek to transform our world.

In this global partnership, I will remain personally involved in promoting healthy and productive oceans, for oceans act as climate regulators and the guardians of ecosystems. To deprive ourselves of the oceans' unexplored treasures would be to deprive humankind of its untapped potential.

Like a ship's crew confronting the immensity of the ocean, our ability to reach the targets that we have set for ourselves will be measured in terms of the progress of the weakest among us. Let us have the courage and provide the means to ensure that those who still see the ocean as a sea of hope are not disappointed. That is the key to our survival, and, what is more, it is our responsibility to build a more balanced, fair and sustainable world. As Charles Baudelaire once wrote:

> "Free man, you will always cherish the sea,
>
> "For the sea is your mirror, and in it you contemplate your soul".

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Sovereign Prince of Monaco for his statement.

His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Cyprus.

Mr. Nicos Anastasiades, President of the Republic of Cyprus, was esorted to the rostrum.

President Anastasiades: Today, we — the world — open a new chapter in history, a chapter of hope and optimism for people and the planet;, a chapter for a future in which democratic values, respect for human rights, the rule of law and the environment will be the central principles that guide us along the path to sustainable development.

The outcome document we have before us, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 70/1) is a monumental achievement on the part of the international community. It is the creation of an unprecedented consultation process that lasted nearly three years. It involved all United Nations Member States, civil society, the private sector, regional actors and organizations, as well as ordinary citizens with an active interest in this noble cause. We feel proud of this achievement, as it reflects the high principles of effective multilateralism and close cooperation of the nations of the world. We are renewing our commitment to completing the job of the unfinished Millennium Development Goals.

Cyprus was actively involved throughout the two-year process of developing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. Together with our two partners, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates — whom we wish to thank from this rostrum for their spirit of teamwork and cooperation — we had our share of contribution to this extraordinary achievement.

We are proud that the universal Agenda that we are endorsing at this Summit is a truly ambitious and inclusive one, with poverty eradication and sustainable development at its heart. It brings together, in a comprehensive and integrated manner, the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. It marks a change of thought and attitude towards our natural resources and the way we use them. It places people at the centre of development efforts. It promotes human prosperity and well-being, peace and justice, and fights inequalities among and within countries. It pursues gender quality and the empowerment of women. It adheres to the full enjoyment of human rights, to the rule of law and the principles of international law and good governance. It is an agenda that relates to all — to every single country in the world and to the very last citizen of the planet.

Those fundamental principles constitute the basis for peace and stability within and among countries, and they are prerequisites for the successful implementation of the new post-2015 development agenda. The financing for development agreement of Addis Ababa and the efforts to reach a globally and legally binding agreement in Paris in December are crucial components of the agenda and important ingredients for its successful implementation. Climate change is a global challenge of the highest priority, owing to its severe and multidimensional effects on humankind and the planet. It should be a central part of the 2030 Agenda, because of its critical importance and cross-cutting nature in the implementation of all Sustainable Development Goals. Cyprus is committed, both nationally and as a member of the European Union, to implementing the Goals and targets of our Agenda at home and abroad.

In conclusion, I would like to extend our sincere thanks and congratulations to the two co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations, Macharia Kamau of Kenya and David Donaghue of Ireland, for their hard work, inspiring leadership and for these extraordinary achievements. As the eyes of the world are upon us, we are making the promise that by 2030 we will deliver a better, more prosperous and peaceful world, which will be sustainable, equitable and just. We owe it to our children and to the future generations.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President of the Republic of Cyprus for his statement.

Mr. Nicos Anastasiades, President of the Republic of Cyprus, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Rouhani (*spoke in Farsi; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I wish to express my deep regret over the heart-rending incident that occurred in Mecca this past Wednesday, involving thousands of Muslims, including Iranians. I offer my heartfelt condolences to the many families who are mourning the loss of their loved ones in that tragic event, and call for swift attention to the injured, as well as an investigation into the causes of this and other similar incidents that have occurred during this year's Hajj pilgrimage.

Environmental problems have taught us humans living on planet Earth that we are all in the same boat. What others do also impacts our destiny, and we cannot be assured of our own peace and security when we ignore how others are living. Indeed, without extensive cooperation at the national, regional and international levels, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would be very difficult. Such cooperation should be mindful of our common destiny and joint commitment to assuming our important human responsibilities.

A common destiny requires a common goal, but that does not mean that the responsibilities of all are the same and equal. It would be impossible, in fact, to achieve the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals without considering the responsibilities of States and their share in creating the environmental status quo. Such an omission would result in fruitless argument.

As I said last year at the summit meeting on climate change, the West Asia region is not only facing warmer climate conditions and the challenges of continued, extensive drought, but it is also grappling with the scourge of terrorism and extremist violence. In other words, violence against man and nature are the dual calamities that have befallen the West Asia region. Two years ago, when I spoke on the issue of a world against violence and violent extremism, I had both of these disasters and their mutual impact in mind. Terrorists, in fact, tend to expand and thrive in lands that are deprived and damaged by environmental disasters and easily seep over borders like mist. Terrorist groups crush any hope of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and the continuation of that situation creates further poverty and environmental destruction. Not only have terrorism and violence damaged the environment, but they have also knocked sustainable development off the agenda of countries, forcing them to expend their national resources on fighting insecurity.

The Islamic Republic of Iran contributed seriously and meaningfully to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. My country actively participated in drafting the post-2015 development agenda and will pursue its constructive cooperation to fulfil its commitments at the national, regional and international levels. As an environmentally friendly Government, we have based our policies on a balanced approach between economic development and environmental protection. Increasing environmental awareness across the board, introducing environmental education in school curriculums, revamping dam-building policies, reviving endangered wetlands and exerting round-the-clock efforts to preserve endangered lakes are but a few examples of our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The process of the past two years and the ensuing nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1 have created suitable conditions for regional and international cooperation, including in the field of environmental preservation. We are eager to cooperate with our neighbours to promote regional sustainable development through active environmental diplomacy, constructive relations with other countries, transfer of technology and knowledge and participation in joint scientific activities in order to do our part in building a more sustainable world, immune from environmental threats.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his statement.

Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussin: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Mozambique.

Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Nyusi (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I would like at the outset to greet all participants in this meeting and to thank the Secretariat for the excellent working facilities put at our disposal, which will surely contribute to the success of this meeting.

It is a great honour and singular privilege for me — for the first time since my election to steer the destiny of Mozambique — to attend, on behalf of the people and Government of my country, the deliberations of this Summit on the post-2015 development agenda. Indeed, this session marks the seventieth year since the inception of the United Nations, and it is special in that it marks the end of the Millennium Development Goals and ushers in a new era of its global commitment to serve humankind. I wish on this occasion to commend and congratulate all those who helped to draft resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". I praise this process because Mozambique was one of the 50 countries selected to participate and had the opportunity to submit its views, which were taken into account in the drafting of the Secretary-General's final report.

Recognizing that countries did not meet all the targets set for 2015, we commend the effort to include in the 17 Goals and targets of the Agenda those areas where expectations were not fully met. During the 15 years of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2), we learned that it is possible to achieve the desired outcomes only if the global goals are part and parcel of our national governance agenda. We have learned that it is possible if we take the initiative to mobilize and engage all stakeholders to take collective action. We have learned about the need to strengthen coordination so that the centre stage of our action focuses on people, the most important capital available to our countries. We have learned that there is a need to increase the capacity for monitoring and evaluating progress in each phase of implementation.

In that context, allow me to highlight the progress made by Mozambique in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, including the expansion of access to education, which has enabled us to enrol 80 per cent of school-age children at the primary level. Our governance action has focused on community awareness, raised mainly in rural areas. We have discouraged the attrition in attendance by girl students, enabling us to achieve a gender balance in access to primary education. Since 2000, the year of adoption of the Millennium Declaration, we have reduced infant mortality from an average of 100 deaths of children under the age of 1 year per 1,000 live births. As for child mortality, the number of children who die under the age of five has fallen from approximately 150 to an average of 97 per 1,000 live births.

At my inauguration in January, I affirmed that we would be leading a Government that is thinking of future generations. The progress made on the indicators I have just mentioned are related to a number of human and social development programmes that the Government has been implementing. It is pursuant to this Agenda that we continue to focus our attention on the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and the rights of adolescents and youth, resulting in greater life expectancy. We have also made interventions to improve access to education, health and other human rights delivered by the State. We believe that strengthening this kind of synergies will be vital for a successful implementation of our sustainable development agenda.

As I conclude my remarks in this first opportunity accorded to us, we wish to state that we undertake in a vigorous way to seize this moment to institutionalize the population factor as the key element for our development. We equally reaffirm our Government's commitment to the principles of this international Organization.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President of the Republic of Mozambique for his statement.

Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam.

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam, was escorted to the rostrum.

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah: It gives me great pleasure to be here on this auspicious occasion, which signifies our continued commitment to improving the lives of our peoples. It has not been an easy task to prepare for a global action plan acceptable to all. I would therefore like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his team for their dedication in helping States Members of the United Nations shape and adopt the post-2015 development agenda (resolution 70/1).

As we commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations this year, it is very timely for us to reflect on our work since the Millennium Summit in 2000 and, at the same time, look beyond 2015. I am encouraged with what we have achieved so far with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The world has witnessed a decline in extreme poverty, an increase in access to primary education in developing regions, and improvements in child and maternal health. These results show that the target-oriented approach is both practical and feasible. At the same time, we note that there has been uneven progress worldwide, which means that there is still much work to be done. I am therefore pleased that our Secretary-General has presented a new development agenda covering targets that are built upon the MDGs and adding new ones to address gaps identified over the past 15 years.

What is reassuring is that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are people-centred, inclusive and comprehensive. They focus on people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. To achieve the Goals, we have to enhance our individual and collective action. Furthermore, we have to work in partnership through capacity-building, learning from each other's experiences and sharing best practices. We have a challenging task ahead of us, but I am optimistic that with our firm commitment, we will be able to deliver. This is why Brunei Darussalam has always valued its cooperation with external partners both bilaterally and multilaterally.

We look forward to further strengthening our relations with various United Nations agencies to support our national development plans that are in line with the SDGs. We also attach great importance to the work of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) towards realizing an ASEAN community by 2015. Later this year, ASEAN will adopt its own post-2015 vision, which will complement and support the global development agenda.

Our task now is to focus on the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs, particularly for developing countries. I also agree with the areas highlighted in the document, which present specific challenges to us. I recognize that we all have different priorities and approaches. But one thing we have in common is our commitment to placing sustainable development at the core of our efforts to give our people a better life. These include alleviating poverty, reducing inequalities, promoting quality education, addressing climate change and achieving gender equality. The SDGs have to be meaningful for every man, woman and child.

It is especially crucial for our youth to be included, because they stand to inherit the new Agenda. I am very pleased that our new Agenda has rightly emphasized their importance. Furthermore, it will provide a platform for their empowerment through initiatives like the provision of universal access to quality education.

Investing in people is vital for our pursuit of the future that we want. We all aspire to creating a better world for our peoples and future generations. We must act boldly and urgently, and our new Agenda will provide a valuable road map to help us as we move forward. To succeed, we must also ensure that peace and stability are maintained. I am therefore pleased to support the adoption of this post-2015 development agenda, and we are confident of its success.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam for his statement.

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Mr. Choummaly Sayasone, President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Sayasone (*spoke in Lao; English text provided by the delegation*): I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the Co-Chairs on their appointment to preside over the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. I would also like to commend His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his leadership of the Organization and for providing support for effective development cooperation over the past decade.

Fifteen years ago, world leaders adopted the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), aimed at reducing global poverty, achieving universal access to primary education, promoting gender equality, improving child and maternal health, ensuring environmental sustainability and enhancing global partnership for development. These are the Goals that we have been striving to achieve by the end of this year. It should be noted that in the past decade and a half, we have been able to make progress in many areas. Global poverty has declined significantly, women and men have become more equal, the number of out-of-school children has dropped by almost half, and both child and maternal mortality rates have improved substantially.

Nevertheless, only some of the targets set by world leaders have been attained. To date, more than 800 million are still living in extreme poverty, an estimated 57 million children are out of school, and the gap between rich and poor continues to widen. The developing countries with the potential to achieve the MDGs have unfortunately been affected by the global economic and financial crisis, political unrest that has occurred in many places, and the constant threat of natural disasters in many countries. Progress in implementing the Goals set has therefore been hindered.

In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, great efforts have been made over the years to integrate the MDGs into our national socioeconomic development plans. Throughout the past five years in particular, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has been implementing its Seventh Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015), which is now entering its final stage. Under the Plan, special attention has been given to reducing poverty among our people. As a result, the poverty rate has declined from the 48 per cent recorded in 1990 to 23 per cent in 2012-2013. It is estimated that the poverty rate will continue to fall in 2015. At the same time, the Lao People's

Democratic Republic has also set a goal to broaden its economic cooperation and strengthen private sector capacity, with a view to maintaining sustained and stable economic growth at 8 per cent per annum.

In the social sector, education has improved significantly, with a net primary school enrolment ratio of 98.5 per cent in 2014, compared to 84 per cent reported in 2005. It should be noted that this year the Lao People's Democratic Republic completed the development of its national primary education equivalency programme. Likewise, the country's health-care services have improved. The number of hospitals and dispensaries has increased in both quantity and quality. In addition, the Lao Government has introduced a policy for delivering free health care at both the central and local levels.

The post-2015 development agenda that we adopted yesterday is of great importance for developing countries, especially the least developed countries (LDCs) and countries in special situations. The Lao People's Democratic Republic agrees with and fully supports the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. At the country level, we will incorporate these Goals and targets into our Vision 2030, our Ten-Year Socio-Economic Development Strategy (2016-2025) and our Eighth Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020). The Eighth National Plan is considered an ambitious plan aimed at ensuring political stability, peace and social order and at poverty reduction, with a view to ultimately enabling the country to graduate from LDC status in 2020.

To attain the SDGs, sufficient resources and an implementation mechanism are crucial. I therefore propose that the international community identify clear and concrete measures, mechanisms and funding support for the effective implementation of our Goals.

In conclusion, I would like to express our profound thanks and deep gratitude to the international community, friendly countries and international organizations for the continued support and assistance extended to the Lao People's Democratic Republic throughout the years, and I do hope that such valuable support will continue in the future. I wish our Summit resounding success.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic for his statement.

Mr. Choummaly Sayasone, President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Korea.

Ms. Park Geun-Hye, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Park (*spoke in Korean; English text provided by the delegation*): At this Summit, we have formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), our vision for the future of humankind. We have taken a momentous step towards a society that leaves no one behind and a future for our planet in which humankind and nature coexist in harmony.

I pay tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and all of the Governments that have worked so hard to succeed in fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals and adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I applaud their hard work.

I believe that the future envisioned in the 2030 Agenda should be more than mere ideals; it should be translated into practical goals that we must be sure to attain, both for us and for future generations. With a sense of historical responsibility that this is our solemn pledge to the next generation, we all need to do our utmost to implement in good faith the 17 Development Goals set out in this new Agenda.

As we implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, I believe that there are a few important points that need to be observed.

First, the process of formulating and implementing a development strategy should be people-centred, and we should accord policy priority to achieving balanced development that encompasses the economy, society and the environment. In addition, given that the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represents both an investment in our future and a driving force for social change, countries should fully mobilize every resource at their disposal to implement them, while also developing implementation plans that accord with their national circumstances.

We should also continue to uphold firmly the principles of democratic and efficient governance, the rule of law, human rights and gender equality, all of which serve as the institutional foundation for achieving the SDGs. Even as Governments lead the implementation of the new development agenda, the engagement of the private sector and civil society must also be expanded.

The Republic of Korea achieved both industrialization and democratization in just half a century, amid the ashes of war and the ordeal of a divided nation. We will actively draw on that valuable experience as we incorporate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into our national development strategy and reinforce our international contributions.

First, in 2016 the Republic of Korea will officially launch the Better Life for Girls Initiative, a health and education official development assistance programme for the most vulnerable girls in developing countries and plans to provide $200 million over the next five years to support it. The provision of health and education services to future generations, including girls, is the surest investment to secure a sustainable future.

Secondly, we will develop the Saemaul Undong, Korea's proven rural development strategy, into a new rural development paradigm to actively support rural progress in developing countries. We will continue to cooperate with the United Nations Development Programme and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in order to appropriately share the Saemaul Undong experience and know-how in a way that fits with the current circumstances and realities of developing countries.

Thirdly, the Republic of Korea will steadily expand its financial contributions to help developing countries move further forward and will work to improve the quality of its development cooperation. Korea epitomizes how the effective use of development resources and well-conceived cooperation projects can lead to astonishing results.

In this regard, the global partnership for effective development cooperation, launched in 2012, offers a useful platform for enhancing the effectiveness of global development cooperation. The Republic of Korea will continue to support the global partnership so that the partnership can play a crucial role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To heighten the transparency of our development cooperation, we will also formally join the International Aid Transparency Initiative next year.

If the 2030 Agenda is to become reality, it is essential to have robust follow-up measures as well as a review mechanism. As the nation presiding over the Economic and Social Council, the Republic of Korea will exercise constructive leadership to help build a sound and reliable review framework.

What lies ahead of us is a 15-year journey towards human dignity and harmony between humankind and nature. It is only when all of us work together that this journey of humankind toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can come to fruition.

The Republic of Korea will always be a partner that can be counted on throughout this journey.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of the Republic of Korea for her statement.

Ms. Park Geun-Hye, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Acting Head of State of Libya.

Mr. Agila Saleh Essa Gwaider, Acting Head of State of Libya, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Gwaider (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, allow me to express my sincerest congratulations to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

We are meeting at the summit level to adopt an important, historic document on sustainable development in its three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) is a people-centred plan of action. We are basing ourselves today on the outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want," and on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiated in 2000. However, this Agenda is larger and more comprehensive in terms of the number of Goals and targets and even broader in terms of areas and concerns.

To transform words into action and plans into achievements, we must ensure, in general, the following elements.

First, the Agenda for Sustainable Development will not be implemented without effective mechanisms for implementation, in particular the necessary funding, which includes the commitments made by developed countries in the framework of official development assistance. This will involve the creation of genuine partnerships, the stimulation of the private sector and other mechanisms, as underscored in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, issued in July. It will also be necessary to emphasize the right of peoples to development, the transfer of technology, capacity-building, coordination and international cooperation.

Respect for the sovereignty of peoples, their religions and cultures and national priorities, and the non-imposition of any non-universally agreed concepts, regardless of nomenclature, should be kept in mind during the process of the development of the special indicators for measuring achievement in 2016.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals emphasize that no one will be left behind. However, the Palestinian people are still suffering under the yoke of foreign occupation, the blockade and denial of their rights. How can we then aspire to sustainable development for the Palestinian people living under such conditions?

To implement the 2030 Development Agenda, we must face many challenges, especially the challenge of security. There can be no development without security, and there can be no security without development. That is why it is incumbent upon us as an international community to cooperate to address the threat of rampant terrorism in all parts of the world and to deal with its root causes. Our approach to terrorism must be multifaceted, including through economic, political, cultural, social and security measures.

Libya made great efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and tried to integrate them into its development plans. Nonetheless, they could not be fully implemented because of political instability and threats to security. Libyan authorities aspire to restore peace, security and stability to the country so that the Government can resume its work from the capital, Tripoli, and develop a long-term national plan consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the framework of our specific religious and cultural history and our national priorities. We also hope to receive assistance from friendly sister countries in support of Libya's efforts to restore stability in its march to democracy and to further support the Government in rebuilding and activating national institutions, including the security and military institutions.

We must emphasize the reservations that my country expressed with regard to some of the Goals and targets as well as to interpretations of some concepts in the outcome document. We hope that those reservations will be considered as an integral part of Libya's position with regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In conclusion, allow me to appeal to the Member States to which Libyan assets were smuggled during the period of the former regime to assist in finding and recovering those assets. They belong solely and rightfully to the Libyan people. Libya could greatly benefit from those resources to finance its development plans and rehabilitate its infrastructures.

Mr. Agila Saleh Essa Gwaider, Acting Head of State of Libya, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Amir of the State of Kuwait.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, was escorted to the rostrum.

Sheikh Al-Sabah (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to congratulate the Co-Chairs on their appointment to chair this Summit. I wish them success in guiding its work so that we can achieve all our aspirations. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his valuable and outstanding efforts and for the Millennium Development Goals Report 2015.

The convening of this historic, unprecedented Summit coincides with the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of this venerable Organization. Over the past decades, it has made great achievements of which we are all proud, and it has enabled us to promote the bonds of international cooperation in various fields while confronting challenges, crises and difficulties.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that we adopted at this Summit (resolution 70/1) have three pillars — economic, social and environmental — which are a starting point towards the achievement of our aspirations for global development. Our aspirations to achieve the targets for sustainable development face great challenges, because of the patterns of conduct of humankind throughout the ages. We now face the impact of natural disasters and a rise in the Earth's temperature, which means we must bear important responsibilities.

The Sustainable Development Goals require innovative funding mechanisms, which should be predictable so as to keep pace with development needs and the requirements to carry out the post-2015 development agenda to eliminate poverty by 2030. That will be possible through collective international efforts and effective global partnerships based on the principle of shared but differentiated responsibility. In that regard, the State of Kuwait emphasizes the need for developed countries to honour their commitment to the international community to allocate 0.07 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance.

The State of Kuwait has consistently shouldered its regional and international responsibilities towards the achievement of the development goals, and it has worked towards solutions to urgent issues. In the past few years, my country has hosted a number of high-level economic, development and humanitarian conferences, and we have launched numerous initiatives to promote partnership and cooperation in the development and humanitarian fields. We consistently follow the progress and the implementation mechanisms of those initiatives to ensure that their declared objectives are being met.

The State of Kuwait has spared no efforts in its endeavours to provide development assistance to the developing and least developed countries through its various institutions. Foremost among them is the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, which provides grants and soft loans to carry out infrastructure projects under favourable conditions in developing countries. In recent years, my country has provided development assistance amounting to 2.1 per cent of its gross domestic product, which is more than double the percentage agreed upon internationally.

We are proud that Kuwait, even though it is a developing country itself, was ranked in first place in providing humanitarian assistance in 2014, according to the *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report* published annually by Global Humanitarian Assistance, a development initiative. The total assistance provided amounted to 0.24 per cent of Kuwaitis' gross national income, which is the highest percentage of gross national income among all donor countries in the world.

The United Nations remains the optimal mechanism for discussing the challenges and risks that face the world. It also remains the appropriate umbrella, reminding us of the responsibilities that we must bear in this world.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the members of the Assembly for listening and to wish them full success in their work.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Amir of the State of Kuwait for his statement.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Councils of State and Ministers of the Republic of Cuba.

Mr. Raúl Castro Ruz, President of the Councils of State and Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Castro Ruz (*spoke in Spanish*): The instability in numerous regions has its roots in the pervasive underdevelopment that afflicts two thirds of the world's population.

Fifteen years after the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, progress remains insufficient and has been inequitably distributed. In many cases, unacceptable levels of poverty and social inequality persist and have even grown more pronounced, including in the industrialized world. The gap between North and South and the polarization of wealth continue to grow. It is evident that we are far from having a true global organization for development.

No fewer than 2.7 billion people in the world live in poverty. The global mortality rate of children under the age of five continues to be many times higher in the developing countries than in the developed, and maternal mortality is 14 times higher. In the midst of the current economic and financial crisis, wealthy individuals and transnational companies grow richer, while the number of poor, unemployed and homeless people continues to rise dramatically owing to cruel, so-called austerity policies. Waves of desperate migrants arrive in Europe in flight from abject poverty and from conflicts that others have unleashed.

Unless there are measurable commitments and timetables, the resources needed to implement the new

Agenda will not be adequate to meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. If we wish to make this a habitable world, with peace and harmony among nations, with democracy and social justice and with respect for the dignity and rights of every human being, we should adopt as soon as possible concrete commitments in terms of development assistance and resolve the debt issue — a debt already paid several times over. We need to build a new international financial architecture, remove the monopoly of technology and knowledge and transform the current economic order. The industrialized nations should accept their historical responsibility and restore the principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities.

The lack of resources must not be used as an excuse when annual military expenditures amount to $1.7 trillion. Absent a reduction in such expenses, neither development nor a stable and lasting peace will be possible.

The re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America, the opening of embassies and the policy changes announced by President Barack Obama with regard to our country constitute an important advance that has met with broad support from the international community. However, the economic, financial and commercial blockade against Cuba remains in place, as it has for half a century, bringing hardship and privation to our people. The blockade remains the main obstacle to our country's economic development. It affects other nations by virtue of its extraterritorial scope and continues to affect the interests of United States citizens and companies. That policy has been rejected by 188 States Members of the United Nations, which have called for its end.

Nevertheless, Cuba has met its Millennium Development Goals and has offered its cooperation to other developing countries in various sectors, and it will continue to do so in proportion to its limited capabilities. We will never renounce our commitment to dignity, human solidarity and social justice, which are the bedrock of our socialist society.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President of the Councils of State and Ministers of the Republic of Cuba for his statement.

Mr. Raúl Castro Ruz, President of the Councils of State and Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Xi Jinping (*spoke in Chinese*): It gives me great pleasure to attend today's Summit. With the United Nations marking its seventieth anniversary, it is highly significant that world leaders have gathered in New York to chart the course of future development.

For the people of all countries, development represents survival and hope and stands for dignity and rights. It was with that aspiration in mind that we established the Millennium Development Goals 15 years ago, in an effort to better the lives of hundreds of millions of people around the world.

Over the course of those years, we have witnessed both continued worldwide growth and the severe impact of the international financial crisis, along with a widespread advance by developing countries and the lingering development imbalance between the North and the South. While we are elated that over 1.1 billion people have now shaken off poverty, we cannot but feel deeply worried that over 800 million people still go to bed every night with an empty stomach.

At the global level, peace and development remain the two dominant themes of our time. If we are to properly address the varied global challenges facing us, including the current refugee crisis in Europe, the only fundamental way of doing this is through peace and development. Given the multitude of challenges and difficulties, we must look to development as the key for only through development can we overcome the root causes of conflicts, safeguard rights and fulfil people's ardent hope for a better future.

The post-2015 agenda adopted at this Summit (resolution 70/1) lays out a new blueprint for global development and provides fresh opportunities for international development cooperation. We should take the Agenda for Sustainable Development as a starting point to work out a new course of equitable, open, all-round and innovation-driven development in the interest of the common development of all countries.

We need to ensure equitable development and to make access to development more equal. All countries should be participants in, contributors to and beneficiaries of global development. Development must not be made available to one or a few countries and not to others. Countries may differ in their capacity for and success in development, but they all have common yet differentiated responsibilities with shared objectives. It is important to improve global economic governance, increase the representation and voice of developing countries and give all countries the right to participate in international rule-making on an equal footing.

We need to ensure open development in order to deliver its benefits to all parties. With economic globalization growing steadily, all countries should make the most of development opportunities and allow the factors of production to flow more freely and smoothly around the world. It is important for all countries to uphold the multilateral trading system through an open economy and to share its benefits through mutual consultation and joint collaboration. We should respect each other's development choices, exchange experiences and see to it that our different paths converge when successful, thereby bringing the rich fruits of development to our peoples.

We need to promote all-round development, to make the groundwork of development more solid. Development will ultimately serve the people. While striving to eliminate poverty and improve people's livelihood, we should first uphold equity and social justice, with a view to ensuring that everyone has access to the opportunities and benefits of development. An effort must be made to coordinate economic, social and environmental development and to achieve the harmonious coexistence of humankind and society and of humankind and nature.

We need innovation-driven development in order to fully tap the potential for development; innovation has produced vibrant drivers for development. Problems that arise in the process of development can be resolved only through development. All countries should look to reform and innovation for ways to improve their development potential, build stronger engines for growth and increase their competitive edge.

The deliverables in the post-2015 development Agenda, which carries with it our solemn commitment, set a high standard. It is often said that the value of any plan is in its implementation. I therefore call on the international community to redouble its collective efforts for the joint implementation of this Agenda and strive to achieve win-win cooperation.

First, let us build up development capacities. Development, in the final analysis, is the job of individual countries. As we Chinese say, one should eat according to the size of one's stomach and dress according to the size of one's figure. It is therefore necessary for each country to formulate a development strategy that is tailored to its own resources and national conditions. The international community has a duty to assist developing countries with capacity-building and to provide them with support and assistance adapted to their actual needs.

Secondly, let us improve the international environment for development. Peace and development go hand in hand. Countries should work together to maintain international peace, promoting development with peace and securing peace through development. A sound external institutional environment is required to sustain development. International financial institutions therefore need to step up their governance reform, and multilateral development agencies need to increase their supply of development resources.

Thirdly, with respect to development partnerships, countries should honour their commitments and live up to their obligations in a timely manner. The international community, while maintaining North-South partnerships as the main form of cooperation, should work to deepen South-South and tripartite cooperation and should encourage the private sector and other stakeholders to play an even larger role in their partnerships.

Fourthly, with a view to strengthening the coordination mechanisms for development, countries need to step up their macroeconomic policy coordination in order to avoid negative spillover effects wherever possible. Regional organizations should accelerate their integration process and build their overall competitiveness by mutually complementing interregional advantages. The United Nations should continue to play its leading role.

Over the 30 years or so that have elapsed since it embarked on reform and opened up, China has followed a development path with distinctly Chinese characteristics, which was chosen in the light of China's national conditions. By lifting 439 million people out of poverty and making remarkable progress in the areas of education, health and women's welfare, China has realized the Millennium Development Goals. Its development has not only improved the well-being of the more than 1.3 billion Chinese people, it has also given a strong impetus to the global course of development.

For more than 60 years, China has taken an active part in international development cooperation. We have provided 166 countries and international organizations with nearly ¥400 billion worth of assistance and dispatched over 600,000 aid workers, over 700 of whom have laid down their precious lives while furthering the development of other countries.

Looking to the future, China will continue to take the right approach by putting justice before interests and will join other countries in concerted efforts to realize the post-2015 development agenda. In that connection, I wish to announce that China will establish an assistance fund for South-South cooperation, with an initial pledge of $2 billion in support of the implementation by developing countries of the post-2015 development agenda. It will continue to increase investment in the least developed countries, with the aim of bringing its total contribution to $12 billion by 2030. China will forgive the debt of the outstanding intergovernmental interest-free loans that are due by the end of 2015 and are owed by specific least developed countries, including the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing States.

China will also establish an international development knowledge centre to facilitate studies and exchanges by countries on development theory and practice suited to their respective national conditions. China will propose discussions on establishing a global energy internet to facilitate efforts to meet the global power demand with clean and green alternatives. China is also ready to work with other parties to move forward the implementation of the One Belt and One Road Initiative in order to achieve the early operation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the BRICS new development bank and contribute to the economic growth and well-being of the people of the developing countries.

China pledges its solemn commitment to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. It is our binding duty to work as one and strive for continued progress in global development.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of the People's Republic of China for his statement.

Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Senegal.

Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Sall (*spoke in French*): Fifteen years ago, world leaders met here with a shared ambition to work together to overcome poverty; fight hunger, disease and social exclusion; promote education and gender equality; and ensure better protection of the environment. With the Millennium Development Goals, the path was thus laid out for reducing inequalities within and among countries and for stopping the irrational exploitation of the planet's resources. There are practical solutions for these issues, and the price of ensuring our common destiny and that of future generations is within our reach.

Over the past 15 years, significant efforts have been devoted to education, health, improving the situation of women and providing access to drinking water. However, in those areas as well as with other Goals, we still have a long way to go at this time of assessment. In many countries, the elimination of hunger, the reduction of maternal and infant mortality, access to energy and sanitation, and the effective protection of the environment are all Goals that remain to be achieved. Throughout the world, millions men and women of all ages continue to live in extreme poverty. In July in Addis Ababa, the third International Conference on Financing for Development revealed our limitations in mobilizing resources to support our development policies.

In a few weeks in Paris, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will provide an opportunity to act together to halt global warming. The future of our planet — our only habitat — depends on that. There again, we know very well what we must do before it is too late. Standards have been established, in particular common but differentiated responsibilities and the principle that the polluter pays. Let us make sure that those obligations are fully adhered to at Conference in Paris. In this way, we will be able to limit greenhouse gas emissions, mobilize the resources necessary to finance the Green Climate Fund, support efforts to adapt to climate change and contribute to transfer of technologies tailored to the needs of target countries.

The resources of the Green Climate Fund and the transfer of appropriate technologies do not fall under assistance; rather they are compensation for the loss of competitiveness on the part of eligible countries that, in order to protect our common environment, were asked to give up less costly but more polluting energies that the wealthy countries have used for centuries in order to ensure their development. The better world we want, on a viable planet for current and future generations, come at this cost. With this cost to be paid to preserve the conditions for life on Earth, is it time to put an end to national and individual self-centredness, so that the dangers that already affect us do not reach an irreversible magnitude.

Senegal also hopes that the Goals in the new Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) will give full effect to the strengthening of the fight against tax evasion, illicit financial flows and other illegal practices; to the financing of infrastructure indispensable for long-term development; and to fair compensation for mining and oil contracts, while respecting the requirements for equity, social justice and corporate social responsibility. In my capacity as Chair of the Steering Committee of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, I renew Africa's call for the implementation of the Strengthening Assistance for Complex Contract Negotiations, of the Group of Seven, to support developing countries in the negotiation of complex contracts, in particular in the extractive industry.

Growth, development and prosperity are primarily a national responsibility. To fulfil that requirement in Senegal we have set up the Emerging Senegal Plan for the structural transformation of our economy, collective and shared sustainable development and the strengthening of good governance and democracy. The Emerging Senegal Plan reflects our vision of development based on the stepping up of internal efforts, partnership and investment.

I extend my congratulations and wishes for success to the Co-Chairs in guiding our work. I wish our Summit every success.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of the Republic of Senegal for his statement.

Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia.

Mr. Muhammad Jusuf Kalla, Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Kalla (Indonesia): It is indeed an honour for me to join this gathering of world leaders to adopt the post-2015 development agenda.

I wish to express my highest tribute to the inclusive process of formulating the post-2015 development agenda, and we commend the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for their able stewardship throughout the process.

This year we stand witness to a historic juncture in development. The post-2015 development agenda represents our oath to our future generations that we will strive together to leave them a legacy of a more prosperous world through sustainable development. In this light, allow me to underline three main points.

First is the lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Fifteen years ago, the MDGs were set. Some targets have been met and important progress was achieved across all Goals. Globally, extreme poverty was reduced by half; 3.3 million deaths from malaria were averted; and 2.3 billion people have gained access to improved drinking water and sanitation.

Nevertheless, inequality among and within countries, as well as poverty, remain the main global challenges. Besides that, new global challenges have also arisen, such as energy inequality, infrastructure gaps, unsustainable consumption, limitations in production, and climate change. Rising conflicts have also set many countries back in their development achievements, fragmenting communities and diverting scarce resources away from productive enterprises. The agenda thus remains unfinished. Based on lessons learned and best practices in achieving the MDGs, we need to intensify our efforts and enhance shared responsibilities, in accordance with national capabilities, as a solid foundation for the new agenda. Here developed countries have to set the example for others to follow.

Secondly, I would like to highlight Indonesia's efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Indonesia has surpassed the goal of halving the percentage of the population living in poverty. Indonesia is also on track to reduce the prevalence of underweight children, reduce the mortality of children under five and to increase enrolment in primary education. Drawing from the implementation of the MDGs, Indonesia has just mainstreamed the post-2015 development agenda into its national development planning. In this respect, Indonesia has, inter alia, reduced public spending on fuel subsidies and enhanced budget allocations for social development programmes such as the Indonesia Health Card and the Indonesia Smart Card to give poor households better access to health care and education.

Thirdly, I wish to emphasize the need to strengthen global partnership. The agenda demands a strong and inclusive global partnership to support the means of implementation, while taking into account national circumstances and development priorities. It is critically important that international commitments be met, including the official development assistance target by developed countries and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, as agreed at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, despite lackluster global economic growth. The financing mechanism should be coupled with knowledge-sharing, technology transfer and wider access to markets for developing countries and least developed countries, including for the middle-income countries, which face many challenges, not least the impacts of the recent global economic turmoil.

Contributions from non-State actors are also of great importance. The private sector and civil society play a tremendous role in job creation and community empowerment. Therefore, corporate social responsibility and philanthropic activities should be enhanced and widened. The political structure should be sufficiently open to incorporate the role of non-State actors.

Development cannot take place in the absence of peace, within or between States. Therefore, preventing conflicts from occurring, resolving conflicts and ensuring appropriate post-conflict reconstruction to ensure sustainable peace should be a priority on the global agenda.

Let me conclude by assuring members that Indonesia stands ready to work together in ensuring that our post-2015 development agenda will not merely be a pipe dream, but a reality for all.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia for his statement.

Mr. Muhammad Jusuf Kalla, Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa.

Mr. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Malielegaoi (Samoa): At the start of this new millennium, world leaders aspired to a shared commitment to a stronger global effort to overcome the grim ills that had robbed so many of the world's people of the opportunity to live in dignity and freedom. This aspiration was captured in the Millennium Development Goals. The new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) we adopted yesterday appropriately inspire great hope. Together, they provide a framework for balanced global development across the economic, social and environmental pillars.

Samoa is proud to be part of this momentous event, a fitting way to mark the commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of our United Nations. "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 70/1) sets out the totality of our sustainable development priorities and represents an inclusive agenda initiated, led and driven by our United Nations Members.

Our United Nations family can justifiably take satisfaction in the strong leadership and collective commitment that finalized the new Development Agenda and made this Summit a reality. Our attention must now squarely turn immediately to establishing required partnerships and mobilizing the needed resources if the new Development Agenda is to be successfully implemented and the Sustainable Development Goals achieved.

Last September, at the closing of the International Conference on Small Island Developing States, which my country and our Pacific region were honoured to host, I ventured the hope that the United Nations community would not treat or view the outcome document of the Conference — the small island developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway — as an end in itself. Therefore I am very grateful to the small island developing States and all their partners for ensuring that the SIDS challenges and priorities captured in the SAMOA Pathway are part of the SDGs, including the means of implementation. Integrating the SAMOA Pathway in our new Agenda ensures that we are faithful to our call of leaving no one behind.

We welcome the reaffirmation in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the special case of SIDS as a recognized United Nations group with special needs and inherent vulnerabilities in the context of sustainable development, not by choice but due to factors outside their control. Recognizing these specificities, it is critically important to repeatedly recall that while the Agenda is universal, this does not equate to a one-size-fits-all approach to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Recognizing the different national realities and challenges, capacities and levels of development of Member States and different groups will be crucial for the effective achievement of the SDGs across the board. Obviously, the availability of accurate data and statistics will be vital to their monitoring and evaluation at the national, regional and global levels.

Work by the United Nations to find meaningful and relevant indicators is underway. During the SDGs process, it proved very difficult to apply the MDGs and their indicators to small island developing countries, and much tailoring was necessary before participation in these global targets was seen as meaningful and relevant for us. It is very important, therefore, that the indicators being developed take into account the realities and experiences of small island States like Samoa so as to be applicable to our situations.

I alluded earlier to the monumental task ahead of us all. Samoa has always been and continues to be a firm believer in the worth of genuine and durable partnerships. We know from our own journey as a nation that with the right combination of different kinds of partnerships we can make our Development Agenda and its implementation truly transformational. The agenda we have endorsed speaks to the need to

> "mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people" (*resolution 70/1, ninth preamblar paragraph.*).

The adoption of the new SDGs is timely for Samoa. Our new strategy for the development of Samoa for the next five years is scheduled to come out in 2016. This gives us space to integrate the SAMOA Pathway and the SDGs into the new strategic direction for the development of our country.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa for his statement.

Mr. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for General Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Mr. Mark Rutte, Prime Minister and Minister for General Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Rutte (Netherlands): One of the previous Secretary-Generals once said, "Never look down to test the ground before taking your next step; only he who keeps his eye fixed on the far horizon will find the right road". These wise words by Dag Hammarskjöld have never been more fitting than they are today.

Fifteen years ago, the international community fixed its gaze on the horizon. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) showed an unprecedented level of ambition. Were the Goals really achievable? We now know the answer. The MDGs have been a big success, even though there are major regional differences and not every Goal was reached precisely as intended.

So what has the world achieved in the past 15 years? Extreme poverty has been halved; maternal mortality has been halved; child mortality has almost been halved; 90 per cent of children in developing countries now receive primary education and 2.3 billion people have gained access to safe drinking water. But in the Assembly, on the eve of the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2016 to 2030, the success of the MDGs should give us confidence in the next leap forward.

The MDGs have taught us many lessons, and today I would like to mention three. First, by working together we can make a difference. Secondly, Goals like eradicating poverty, achieving gender equality and giving the poor better health care and sanitation should go hand in hand with multi-stakeholder involvement, sound economic principles and sustainable development. Thirdly, we must have more private sector involvement in long-term financing, in public-private partnerships and in projects on the ground.

Last year, more than 60 partners signed the Post-2015 Charter, a corporate initiative that brings together Dutch businesses, universities and other organizations committed to the agenda we are discussing at this Summit.

So what does private sector involvement look like in practice? It could look like the ambition Heineken has formulated for its breweries in Africa and the Middle East to source 60 per cent of all its ingredients locally. The Netherlands is supporting this effort by offering training for farmers. In Burundi, this partnership has already enabled 18,000 farmers to make a steady income by supplying this world-famous Dutch brewer. It could also look like the Health Insurance Fund, a public-private initiative supported by some of the largest Dutch insurance companies. In 2014 alone, the Fund provided health and agricultural insurance for 460,000 people in sub-Saharan countries, 60 per cent of whom were women.

But it could also look like the Amsterdam Initiative against Malnutrition (AIM), which was launched in 2009. AIM brings together many partners: the Dutch Government and non-governmental organizations; multinationals in food and chemicals, like Unilever, DSM and AkzoNobel; and agricultural knowledge institutions like the Wageningen University and Research Centre. AIM's project portfolio now provides 26 million people with better access to nutritious foods.

Within the framework of the SDGs and corporate social responsibility, many individual firms, large and small, are expressing a growing desire for more effective public-private partnerships. They believe that the "S" in SDGs offers opportunities for investment and innovation. It is up to Governments and the United Nations to make sure that the legal and economic frameworks are in good working order. I am confident that in doing so we can unleash far more trade and investment in poor countries, moving the needle further from charitable to profitable in the years ahead.

Our commitment to jointly promoting development in the framework of the United Nations is one of the main reasons why the Kingdom of the Netherlands is seeking a seat on the Security Council for the 2017-2018 term. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is fully committed to making the next leap forward.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister and Minister for General Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for his statement.

Mr. Mark Rutte, Prime Minister and Minister for General Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

Mr. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Mosisili (Lesotho): At the turn of the new millennium, we gathered in this very Assembly Hall to adopt the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Through the MDGs, we created a blueprint for ending extreme poverty and indeed offered new hope to the world's poorest that their well-being would be significantly improved by the year 2015.

As we lament our failure to meet the MDGs in full, we ought to acknowledge that in most countries significant progress was recorded in accelerating MDG indicators such as free primary education and the empowerment of women. Lesotho is no exception in this regard. We ought to further acknowledge that the hurdles we faced provided a great learning experience as we focus on the way forward.

As we mark the end of the MDGs cycle, we do so with a renewed sense of hope because, through the outcome document (resolution 70/1) that we have just adopted, we clearly articulate our unwavering commitment to addressing the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. The post-2015 development agenda provides a fresh impetus to our common strategies for addressing the key challenges on the path to a better life for all.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development signifies the growth agenda for the twenty-first century. It is a plan of action for ending poverty in all its forms irreversibly, everywhere and leaving no one behind. It seeks to ensure peace and prosperity, and places people at the centre. The 17 integrated, interlinked and indivisible Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the people's Goals and demonstrate the scale, universality and ambition of this new Agenda. The relevance of this new Agenda lies in its emphasis on poverty eradication as an overarching Goal of the envisaged sustainable development, which seeks integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions.

There is no doubt that the SDGs are more ambitious than the MDGs. Their attainment will therefore be all the more challenging. It is gratifying to note that the means of implementation outlined in the outcome document match these ambitious Goals by focusing on finance, technology and capacity development. It is also a cause for celebration that in addition to a stand-alone Goal on the means of implementation, specific means are tailored for each of the SDGs.

Lesotho could not agree more with the clarion call for departure from "business as usual", as well as intensified international cooperation on all fronts. The new Agenda puts emphasis on increased capacity-building and better data and statistics to measure sustainable development. It would therefore be remiss of me not to underscore the importance of an effective follow-up and review regime to support the effective implementation of this new Agenda.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate the need to translate the ambitious Agenda that we have just adopted into pragmatic, sustainable national development plans. Furthermore, we need to ensure that adequate institutional, human and financial capacities are in place at the national level in order for us to achieve these Goals. We need to engage the private sector and other stakeholders so that we can be the first generation to end extreme poverty and the last generation to face climate change as an existential threat.

Sustainable development ought to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We need to bequeath to future generations a solid foundation that they can build on. Without the full political commitment of all world leaders, the attainment of the SDGs will remain a distant mirage. The attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals is not an option but an imperative of our time. We owe it to humankind to achieve these Goals at all costs.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho for his statement.

Mr. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Iceland.

Mr. Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iceland, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Gunnlaugsson (Iceland): This autumn has already produced a truly impressive harvest. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda alone amount to a bumper crop, and I am optimistic that we will see an excellent result from the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Indeed, Iceland recently pledged a 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse-gas emissions by 2030.

The 2030 Agenda that we adopted at this Summit is a remarkable achievement. It testifies to the power of the multilateral system. All of the Goals have equal weight, and success in one area helps us to succeed in the others. Ending poverty and hunger is obviously fundamental to the ability of human beings to fulfil their potential, and improving infrastructure helps to alleviate poverty and hunger. The Agenda also correctly identifies the sustainable management of natural resources as key to these aims.

In the end, we have only two sources of food: the ocean and the land. We must manage both with great care and responsibility. Utilizing marine resources in a responsible manner based on scientific evidence plays a vital role in ensuring food security and prosperity. We must also seriously address land and soil degradation and aim at least for a land-degradation-neutral world. Iceland will continue to contribute to the sustainable management of both oceans and land at home and abroad.

The lack of access to sustainable and affordable energy is a major contributing factor to poverty. Here I would like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General and his Sustainable Energy for All Initiative, which has given important impetus to establishing measurable goals and targets in this area. Iceland is aiming to become a carbon-neutral economy. Already almost all of our stationary energy comes from renewables, and Iceland will continue to support a number of developing countries in harnessing geothermal energy so as to improve living standards and our climates at the same time.

Through the tragic experiences of many seeking a better life or safety from conflict, we have become keenly aware in recent months of the nexus between security, development and human rights. It is important that the Agenda addresses specifically the multidimensional reality of migration and the need for international cooperation to ensure that it is safe and orderly. It is also important that the particular burden borne by communities hosting refugees be recognized.

The Sustainable Development Goals are a major challenge and will require the commitment and energy of all countries and all people. Therefore, Iceland is particularly gratified that we were all able to agree on an approach to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in order to attain the Goals that we have set ourselves. We also recognize the role that men and boys must play in eliminating discrimination and violence against women and girls. One campaign in support of this idea has already proven effective — UN-Women's HeForShe campaign — which I am proud to say Icelandic men have supported in large numbers. I urge all men and boys to join the battle for equality.

At this Summit, we are collectively committing to a number of reforms for women and girls in order to achieve equality by 2030. Iceland will continue to provide much-needed funding for the issue of gender equality. The Icelandic parliament has agreed to a large increase in funding for issues of equality for the next five years. At least half of those funds will go to supporting equality measures internationally.

I am also particularly pleased that our Agenda includes a reference the prevention and treatment of neurological disorders. Progress in that field can improve the lives of millions.

Today we mark a major achievement, but we all know the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Effective implementation of the Agenda will be challenging. The Government of Iceland will join others in tackling these challenges at the national, regional and global level. Iceland is committed to taking action. Let us make history together.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Iceland for his statement.

Mr. Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iceland, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Sweden.

Mr. Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister of Sweden, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Löfven (Sweden): I was a foster child. At the age of 10 months, I arrived by train to my new parents in the northern part of Sweden. I had the good fortune to be taken into a loving home and to be brought up in a society where the legacy of the past does not prevent a good future, and in a society where people take responsibility, not only for themselves but also for others.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) carries that same sense of shared responsibility. It is grounded in the firm belief that poverty can and should be eradicated, that climate change can and must be stopped, and that equal societies are better societies — and the foundation for a better future for all of us. We now have a new road map. It is universal. No country can shirk its responsibility, but Governments' efforts alone will not be enough. Efforts are needed at all levels, across all sectors, and by all stakeholders. That is why Sweden has launched an initiative with nine world leaders in a high-level support group designed to bolster momentum for the implementation of the Agenda.

The mission ahead of us as a global community is not only morally right but is also economically smart, because equality and development are two sides of the same coin. When we promote gender equality, talent and strength are released. Gross domestic product grows when more women work. Skills are unlocked when girls and boys go to school. We cannot afford to hold half of our population back. All legal, social and economic barriers to women's and girls' empowerment must therefore be removed.

When we promote decent work for all, competitiveness will increase. Some say that this is a contradiction in terms. I say it is a win-win-win situation. It is a win for employees. It is a win for employers. And it is a win for our societies. With decent work that respects fundamental labour rights, we can increase both productivity and inclusive growth. When we develop new solutions to reduce emissions, we will stop climate change and in doing so also create new jobs. My goal is for Sweden to be among the first fossil-fuel-free welfare nations, and I want Swedish companies to develop the climate-smart innovations that the world is asking for.

Our development cooperation will help to break the link between development and fossil-fuel dependence. We remain the key donor to the Green Climate Fund. We stay true to the goal of 1 per cent of our gross national income for official development assistance. What we all need now is determination, and to start fulfilling our common Goals. In doing so, we will gain something more. We return to the true purpose of society: to grant all girls and boys the simple things that I was once granted, namely, a fair chance, an equal education, a decent job — and a life of freedom.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister of Sweden for his statement.

Mr. Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister of Sweden, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Georgia.

Mr. Irakli Garibashvili, Prime Minister of Georgia, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Garibashvili (Georgia): It is a privilege to address the Assembly at this historic moment as we launch the transformative agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Today we are embarking on an ambitious journey that will require bold steps from all of us in response to the tremendous challenges that humankind is facing in today's world. The 17 Sustainable Development Goalsthat have been agreed, with their 169 associated targets, are there to guide us in this complex journey.

A smooth transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals of the post-2015 agenda is crucial. In 2000, the MDGs were truly revolutionary in providing a common language for addressing global challenges. In my country, they became a tool for national stakeholders to discuss, prioritize and advocate for development, in collaboration with civil society and international stakeholders.

The launch of the SDGs gives new impetus to these efforts. In this process, we should ensure that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) enjoys the widest possible public support and engagement. While acknowledging the importance and urgency of all 17 agreed Goals, I would like to focus on some of the specific SDGs that are of particular importance to Georgia.

Goal 3, on ensuring healthy lives at all ages, is one of Georgia's key priorities. I would like to name some of the steps we are taking to this end. Together with international partners, the Government is carrying out an unprecedented hepatitis C elimination programme. Patients are provided with the necessary tests for the purposes of prediagnosis and treatment monitoring, and they receive the latest drugs for the treatment of the disease.

Increased Government funding for maternal and child health and ease of access to quality health-care services are vital for reducing the mortality rate of mothers and children. Georgia met MDG 4, with the infant mortality rate dropping to 10 per 1,000 live births and that of children under the age of 5 dropping to 12 per 1,000 live births.

Goal 7 stresses the importance of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Over the past decade, Georgia's electricity sector has undergone major changes with a view to creating an open, liberal and commercially viable energy sector that is resistant to market fluctuations. Due to our intensive reforms, our power sector has been a net electricity exporter since 2007. With its unique location, Georgia creates many opportunities for energy transit. I wish to highlight the Association Agreement signed with the European Union, which paves the way for Georgia to become a full-fledged member of the Energy Community.

We attach utmost importance to Goal 9, on building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation. Supporting small and medium size businesses in agriculture and other industries is one of our key priorities. We have implemented projects aimed at creating new jobs in rural areas, improving land use and land consolidation efficiency, and enhancing the export potential of agricultural products.

Goal 16, on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, is one of the core SDGs, since progress in all areas depends on effective governance. Transparency, access to public information, and the integrity of public institutions are the most important principles required for our Government to function effectively. In Georgia, we are consolidating legislation introducing new standards for freedom of information, based on the principle of openness.

Of course, these Goals must also apply to the people living in conflict-affected areas. With two Georgian regions under foreign occupation and a substantial part of our population forcefully displaced, we know all too well how urgent it is to address their needs.

Sustainable development is the pathway to the future that we want for everyone. It offers a framework for economic growth, social justice, environmental stewardship and strong governance. Achieving such a world is possible, but only if we work together. It is not just an ethical imperative; it is the right and smart thing to do. Our globalized world will not work if millions are excluded. Georgia will continue to work hand in hand with its partners to make this happen through an ambitious and comprehensive post-2015 development framework.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister of Georgia for his statement.

Mr. Irakli Garibashvili, Prime Minister of Georgia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Hun Sen (Cambodia) (*spoke in Khmer; English text provided by the delegation*): Today, I have the great honour to attend the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. On the seventieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations, we are opening a new chapter in humankind's history book, which is marked by stronger global development cooperation.

The theme of this Summit, "Transforming the world: realizing the post-2015 development agenda", highlights our globally shared undertakings and responsibilities in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the next 15 years and building on the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which we jointly adopted 15 years ago.

In this spirit, I am pleased to inform the meeting that, over the past two decades, Cambodia has undergone tremendous change, especially in securing full peace, strong political stability and improved public security, with high economic growth averaging 7.7 per cent per annum. The poverty rate declined significantly from 53 per cent in 2004 to 16 per cent in 2013, ensuring that Cambodia achieved the MDG targets for poverty reduction and other social sectors ahead of 2015. The remaining Goals are expected to be reached by the end of 2015.

Cambodia is now transitioning into the next stage of its development to become a lower-middle income country by 2016. In this connection, the Royal Government of Cambodia deems the 17 SDGs, which were based on the MDGs, to be very relevant to Cambodia's situation, especially in building on the achievements made over the past 15 years. But they are even more important in supporting Cambodia's transition into middle-income country status, especially during the early stages of this transition. However, Cambodia will incorporate the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnance as an additional SDG to fully reflect the current situation and needs on the ground.

With regard to SDG financing, the Royal Government of Cambodia fully endorses the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which focuses on domestic resource mobilization to meet development needs. Nonetheless, Cambodia would like to request that additional support be extended to those least developed countries that are successfully graduating to the next stage of development until they can stand on their feet and compete internationally. That additional support should take the form of official development assistance either through grants and/or concessional loans to address basic needs such as infrastructure gaps and human resource and institutional development.

Forging consensus on the post-2015 development agenda is a major achievement by our global leaders. However, ensuring the success of that agenda as we planned remains a major challenge for us all. For this reason, I believe that we all should resolve to jointly address key issues as follows.

First, we must ensure the fulfilment of the donor commitments to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries.

Secondly, we need to further enhance trade policies and trade facilitation, including the provision of preferential treatment to developing countries, in accord with the spirit of equitably and efficiently sharing the benefits reaped from globalization.

Thirdly, we should further strengthen stability and promote diversification of the financial sector, encourage innovation and promote the role and dynamism of the private sector to meet the financial needs in realizing the SDGs.

Fourthly, we need to further strengthen country ownership through building partnerships among all stakeholders in development, including bilateral and multilateral development partners, the private sector and other development actors.

Fifthly, we must ensure policy coherence with transparency and accountability, aligning the policies of bilateral and multilateral development partners with national policy priorities and the SDGs.

Finally, I believe that the post-2015 development agenda will become an important tool to help all countries to adhere to an appropriate development path and to ensure that the next generations will live in a harmonious and prosperous society.

Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Mr. Timothy S. Harris, Prime Minister, Minister for Sustainable Development, National Security, People Empowerment and Constituency Empowerment of Saint Kitts and Nevis, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Harris (Saint Kitts and Nevis): We, the Member States, are at the cusp of another remarkable opportunity to transform the human landscape in ways that could redefine the future for so many of our peoples. I am therefore delighted to participate in this historic Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda and with it, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We have come a long way since the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 15 years ago. Although success has sometimes been scarce, we can take comfort in knowing that millions of people have been lifted out of poverty. Millions more now have improved access to education, and the prevalence of the dreaded HIV/AIDS pandemic has diminished.

As many here have intimated, this is a significant moment for the United Nations. It is refreshing to see that even at 70 years old, the General Assembly can take youthful strides of optimism towards the future.

As we begin the post-2015 period and the Sustainable Development Goals, please allow me a brief moment to reflect on the very origins of the period now coming to a close. For most of us, the MDGs process was a watershed, a period of unprecedented scope and promise, which, I am pleased to say, did deliver on many targets but, regrettably, fell short on others.

As the post-2015 period begins, the new Team Unity Government in Saint Kitts and Nevis is committed to working internationally to bring about transformational changes in programmes and policies that benefit all our peoples. We fully support the outcome document of this Summit, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 70/1), and we will remain focused on the fulfilment of the Goals and targets.

The pursuit of the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs for 2030 is an organic process for us, simply because in Saint Kitts and Nevis we have a people-centred Government. It is a Government focused on and working for the sustainable development of all of our people. We continue to increase access for all to high-quality health care and to upgrade the delivery, rigor and relevance of primary and secondary education, which is compulsory for all children from ages 5 to 16. In addition, we are reforming our laws to attract the right investments in priority areas to stimulate economic growth and diversification, which will give our young people better access to reliable and decent work. We are determined to preserve the dignity and human rights of our people. We will champion policies for good governance, transparency, social equity, justice, security and prosperity for all.

Our Government is fully committed to the Sustainable Development Goals, which simply, philosophically and fundamentally embody the genuine aspirations of our people. We welcome the 2030 Agenda and are glad to see the Goals prioritized during this Summit.

I must say that as a vulnerable small island State, elements such as Goal 13, on climate change, and Goal 14, on oceans and seas, are especially pleasing. Climate change is an existential threat to our islands. Our reality is that our coastlines are wearing away. Our pristine beaches, essential to our tourism industry and hence to our economic survival, are slowly disappearing, year after year. Droughts are now more prolonged, severe and frequent. This year, for example, we in Saint Kitts and Nevis suffered one of the most prolonged and severe drought spells. The consequence has been water rationing for the consuming public.

We are witnessing the destruction of our livelihood by natural disasters and sea-level rise. We do not know from one year to the next which island will be devastated or set back decades in development. That is why forums such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations are so important to us, given the imperative of making sure that we adopt a realistic and comprehensive agreement in Paris at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, later this year. The response to climate change requires input from all nations, large and small. Taiwan, with its advanced renewable-energy technologies, should be allowed to participate in relevant international meetings and mechanisms, such as the UNFCCC and the United Nations Environment Assembly.

Regrettably, our oceans and seas have been neglected, and as a result they are suffering from increasing pollution, coral degradation and over-exploitation. It is important to note that Saint Kitts and Nevis, a small island State with a landmass of roughly 105 square miles, has a territorial maritime space in excess of 12,427 square miles. Therefore, our future lies not only on land but most importantly in the sea. We will move to delineate our boundaries with our neighbours so that we may better utilize this unexploited frontier in our efforts to enhance our development. Oceans and seas impact our economic, social, and environmental well-being, and they are critical to the future livelihood of the islands and coastal communities. The sea is key to our national survival, to our food security and to the creation of more decent jobs and potentially holds untapped resources.

As a small island developing country, we understand the relationship between renewable energy, food security and sustainable development. Hence we are making investments in renewables, including geothermal, wind and solar energy, and are developing programmes to optimize the synergies. We want our people to succeed and prosper, and we promise our people a fair share for all. Our Government will therefore continue to create legislative frameworks that cement our democracy and institutions. We will design more programmes to promote healthier lives and lifestyles, eradicate poverty, enhance quality education and ensure gender equality and human rights for all.

That said, notwithstanding our bilateral partnerships for effective and inclusive development and the work we are doing locally, none of our countries can do it alone. We need real support to implement the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, international financing for sustainable development has to be an overarching priority. Better South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation is therefore an imperative. Serious consideration should be given to the proposals advanced by the Commonwealth finance ministers, who have repeatedly stressed the importance of finding innovative strategies for helping small developing States gain access to international sources of funding.

Dominica's devastation by Tropical Storm Erika highlights the vulnerability of small island developing States (SIDS) and why development cannot be taken for granted. It also makes the cogent point that the graduation of SIDS on the basis of per capita income is imprudent in the context of our vulnerability.

Finally, over the last 15 years, we have learned valuable lessons. We have observed that success requires continuing commitment, institutional backing, adequate financing and effective implementation. Today we have an opportunity to build on the gains of the MDG process. How we proceed will determine whether future generations look back at this, the seventieth year, as a genuine watershed or simply another missed opportunity.

The United Nations has proved its mettle in the past and it can rise again to the challenge. I am optimistic. The world has cause for optimism. Saint Kitts and

Nevis supports this process, these Goals and the ideals of our United Nations. We will therefore play an active role in creating a sustainable future for all.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis for his statement.

Mr. Timothy S. Harris, Prime Minister, Minister for Sustainable Development, National Security, People Empowerment and Constituency Empowerment of Saint Kitts and Nevis, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the President of the Council of Ministers of the Lebanese Republic.

Mr. Tammam Salam, President of the Council of Ministers of the Lebanese Republic, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): This Summit, at which we have adopted resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", is inspiring. Our world does indeed need to be transformed. The Goals listed in the Agenda constitute an adequate canvas for any coherent national strategy for sustainable development.

But it is in their implementation that our countries encounter difficulties, especially when it comes to the integration of sustained economic growth, inclusive social development and the protection of the environment. These three pillars are equally determining inasmuch as they cross-fertilize one another other to cement sustainability.

The challenges are numerous. In the case of Lebanon, it is the humanitarian issues caused by the Syrian refugee crisis that constitute one of the greatest challenges to development. Lebanon, a country of 4 million inhabitants — the smallest in the region — has borne the brunt of the mass forced displacement of people out of Syria. My country today hosts more than 1.2 million registered Syrians, representing almost a third of its population. This has had a devastating impact on development, economic activity, social progress and the environment, overstretching the capacity of our national institutions in the areas of health care, education, energy, water, sanitation and security.

It has set back development and even threatened to reverse it and has weighed dramatically on our economy, generating a cost of about one third of our gross domestic product (GDP). The international response has been inadequate to address a crisis of this magnitude and duration. Limited resources were concentrated on humanitarian funding, while development assistance and burden-sharing in terms of finance and resettlement were needed. The refugee crisis facing Europe today is a direct consequence of that insufficient response.

In this regard, we welcome the recognition in the 2030 Agenda of the forced displacement of people as a result of spiralling conflict, violent extremism and terrorism, and the recognition of the need to strengthen the resilience of host communities, particularly in developing countries. This should be done through a systematic assessment of the costs of hosting refugees, reliably predicting long-term financing needs and implementing equitable resettlement arrangements based on burden-sharing principles.

In Lebanon, resilience is essentially articulated on the efforts of the private sector. One major component of this potential is the Lebanese diaspora, through remittances. In this connection, it is essential to review the unnecessary restrictions imposed on remittances. They result in a disproportionate increase of transfer costs, thus penalizing those at the receiving end and producing direct negative effects on consumption and schooling, the areas to which they are essentially directed. In that way, these constraints are affecting vital elements of development and stability, because consumption is a major component of GDP in developing nations. Education is key in this process, as it is also a rampart against extremism and a factor of moderation.

We invest a great deal in the education of our children, only to see them leave the country when they reach working age. This is seriously impacting our productivity, and the surest way to counter this trend is through sustainable and balanced development. Indeed, it is essential to avoid the pitfalls of favouring development poles, for it is only through promoting inclusive growth that we can avoid creating pockets of underdevelopment, even within urban centres, in which all kinds of fanatic ideologies can fester.

Respect for human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, democracy, promotion of good governance and the rule of law, and universal access to justice are all elements that favour development. Hence, reforms in those areas are indispensable for sustainable development. Development fuels them, and without them growth is bound to falter. Without them no society can enjoy stability, security, fairness and equity.

As regards international aid, which is an essential factor in triggering development in less advanced countries, it is crucial to review the notion of middle-income countries, because that label can penalize many nations that lose their access to aid while they may be in more urgent need of aid than others not so classified. Accordingly, the approach to global aid should be revamped to take into account specificities, and, most importantly, it should include targeted contributions that can shore up development, ensuring that it is sustainable.

Maybe one of the most important Goals is to enhance global partnership. It is time that more advanced societies recognize that by helping less developed ones through the transfer of knowledge and technologies, they are also sustainably helping themselves.

Respecting our environment, reducing pollution and correcting past damage should be seen as goals in themselves, as well as the criteria for progress in achieving sustainability. They help to effectively monitor the process in a comprehensive way. We also believe in upholding the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and look forward to the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris later this year.

In conclusion, we commend the recognition of development as a right for every human being, for it is the bedrock of well-being. But we equally need to recognize the primordial importance of putting an end to armed conflicts, terrorism, sectarian violence and hatred, so that we can ensure the security, stability and peace that constitute the indispensable conditions for development and the primary duty of leadership and Governments everywhere.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of the Council of Ministers of the Lebanese Republic for his statement.

Mr. Tammam Salam, President of the Council of Ministers of the Lebanese Republic, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Rui Maria de Araújo, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Araújo (Timor-Leste): The 70-year history of this great institution has been marked by a shared quest for peace and development. Today, we have before us a momentous opportunity to approach the goal of this arduous journey. We have agreed on a united means to finally realize our common goals, namely, to end extreme poverty, to fight inequality and injustice and fix climate change. With the new global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), we can do this and more as we chart a fresh course for all countries and all peoples.

This Summit marks the culmination of our collegial endeavour to define a new, ambitious sustainable development agenda. What we have achieved over the course of the past two years is remarkable. I commend all who have worked so tirelessly throughout the process that has brought us to the Hall this week, together with the unprecedented participation of civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders. But we cannot seek applause just for putting in place a new suite of goals and targets. Our individual and collective success or failure will be judged on how well we continue to work together, as national Governments and the international community, to execute this new Agenda.

As we boldly step onto the path towards sustainability, we are reminded by the current state of the world that it will be a difficult, even perilous, journey. We are also very aware that all issues of principle have not been settled. The Agenda just adopted by the Assembly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, provides a means to bridge our ideological differences by reaching agreement on a set of practical actions that we can advance together. It provides a framework for navigating existing, looming and as yet unforeseen challenges. It shifts us away from an aid-centric approach to development. For the first time, we have a global Agenda that speaks to all people and is to be applied by all countries. It recognizes that development is a continuing spectrum. It cannot be achieved by merely copying the practices of others, and history has shown that imposed solutions rarely gain traction. Therefore, we welcome the fact that the new Agenda is founded on country-stewardship and on adapting international learning to our national and cultural contexts.

The best way we can equip ourselves for success will be by ensuring that our institutions have the capacity to undertake the tasks with which they are charged. No country is immune from the challenge of institutional capacity-building, nor is our international or regional architecture. Without fit-for-purpose, effective and accountable institutions we cannot make the leap from the setting of lofty goals to the delivery of the services, infrastructure and programmes that our people deserve and demand.

In an era of meteoric change and an increasingly turbulent world, we can no longer simply set goals and forget them. We need the means to deal with the rapid transfer of technologies and ideas, the increasing movement of people and the flight of capital. We need to establish and sustain appropriate systems of governance. They empower us to generate and manage the resources required to tackle poverty and inequality and to live in harmony with our natural environment.

Our Governments will be the primary custodians of the Agenda, and domestic revenue mobilization will be the principal means of implementation. But we cannot operate in isolation from our national, regional and international partners. We are mindful that, as we seek to improve domestic resource collection and management, such efforts are often thwarted through tax avoidance and corruption. Then, as we set out to strengthen national institutions, we must also improve global governance around these and other issues as well.

We also remain aware of the importance of improving the delivery of international development assistance, focusing on predictability and on strengthening the use of country systems. If we are serious about eradicating extreme poverty, then we cannot shy away from our national and international commitments to properly resource the implementation of this Agenda. Together we share a moral obligation to realize the long-overdue aspirations set out in the new Goals. Globally, we have the resources, the technology and the know-how. Those elements can be harnessed only if we also commit to and sustain broad political engagement for the duration of this Agenda. We have before us a comprehensive plan of action. The test now is our willingness to act and transform our ambition into reality.

Timor-Leste is proud of its participation in defining the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 16, and pledges today to fulfil our role in its enactment. I am pleased to announce that our Council of Ministers has already endorsed the new global Goals, paving the way for their operationalization within the context of our strategic development plan and our internal budget processes. Our vision is to transition from a low-income to an upper-middle-income country, with a healthy, well-educated and safe population by 2030. We will get there only if we continue to focus on addressing the immediate needs of our people, while consolidating peace and stability and building the institutions of the State.

With that foundation, we can and will continue to expand our economy to create more decent jobs for our people. We can and will invest in essential infrastructure and improve our social services. We can and will tackle rising inequality. We can and will be good global citizens. If we all step beyond our national affiliations and come together for the common good, we can defeat the scourge of climate change, protect our oceans and improve life on land.

I urge all countries to join us today in taking ownership of this Agenda, not only to adopt it, but to redouble our efforts and commitments towards its implementation. Accomplishing the Goals that we have collectively set will require a renewed sense of international cooperation and collaboration. Shared learning and dialogue can guide us through the challenges of the next 15 years. Timor-Leste is proud to work with other Member States on the implementation of the SDGs. Together, we can unlock opportunities not yet envisaged. We can deliver a world of peace and prosperity for our children to inherit. Let that be our legacy this week.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste for his statement.

Mr. Rui Maria de Araújo, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on His Excellency Mr. François Louncény Fall, Minister of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs and of Guineans abroad of Guinea.

Mr. Fall (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Fifteen years ago we adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). That huge undertaking was a response to the absolute need for us to eradicate poverty throughout the world. It called for synergies between national action and international generosity aimed at promoting equal access for all people to basic services in order to ensure their well-being.

It is true, of course, that undeniable progress has been achieved in many areas, which has allowed more than a billion people to emerge from extreme poverty. Illiteracy has been reduced. The supply of drinking water, electricity and medical services has improved. Technological knowledge is becoming increasingly accessible. However, beyond such reasons for satisfaction, there are still challenges on the path to prosperity for all.

For that reason, we welcome the adoption of a new post-2015 development agenda, which covers the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It is clear that the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) just adopted, are more ambitious than those of the MDGs. Their fulfilment will require the mobilization of adequate resources. It is up to us to take ownership by including them in national development programmes based on the inclusive participation of all segments of society. It goes without saying that our efforts should be guided by coordination and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the 17 Goals set by the new Agenda.

In that dynamic, Guinea has been working to make the empowerment of women and jobs for young people a catalyst for national development. Significant budgetary resources have been invested to allow women to gain access to microcredit and to allow young people to receive training and obtain decent jobs. Success depends on sustained growth based on the development of infrastructure, industrialization and innovation.

Naturally, health services, whose fragility was demonstrated in the management of the Ebola health crisis, will now receive greater attention in order to increase their capacity to respond to pandemics and provide health coverage for the population.

Sustainable development is synonymous with environmental protection. Our determination to ensure the survival of our planet is unwavering. It will be confirmed in Paris in December during the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which will bring States together to agree on binding measures to ensure a bright future for future generations.

Peace and security are clearly the keys conditions for achieving our ambitions. They will be even more sustainable if the rule of law prevails, which will generate good governance at the political and economic levels. I would like to make a strong appeal to the international community to maintain the spirit of generosity and solidarity, which was lacking with the MDGs but must be present with the SDGs, so that by 2030 the terrible threat of poverty and all that goes with it will not hang over the heads of our societies.

The path is already marked by the unfaltering commitment of our Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and the self-sacrificing service of the Co-Chairs. They merit our sincere recognition.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Vice-President of the Republic of Angola.

Mr. Manuel Domingos Vicente, Vice-President of the Republic of Angola, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Vicente (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by delegation*): On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Angola, allow me to congratulate Mr. Sam Kutesa, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, for his role in the drafting of resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". We welcome the efforts of the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental process in the preparation of that document. We also extend our gratitude to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his efforts in achieving this goal.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development was a symbolic moment and a starting point for the current intergovernmental processes that have contributed to the eradication of poverty and the creation of coherent structures of social, economic and environmental inclusion with a view to achieving comprehensive sustainable development. The intergovernmental process for the preparation of the new agenda required a significant effort to arrive at an ambitious and structured document, based on a shared vision of the future that we want to build and an action plan that complements the Millennium Development Goals.

Angola believes that the post-2015 development agenda, adopted in the form of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in resolution 70/1, is a key policy tool that aims to reduce the existing gap among countries, both developed and developing. In adopting the 2030 Agenda, Member States have reaffirmed Goals relating to the eradication of poverty and hunger, the protection and promotion of all rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and special attention to all vulnerable groups as absolute priorities.

In that context, we reaffirm the Government of Angola's political will to continue all efforts that contribute to increasing women's representation at all levels of decision-making, especially bearing in mind the Planet 50-50 by 2030 campaign. Likewise, the Agenda seeks to preserve the legacy of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, so that the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals will be geared towards the pursuit of prosperity, based on the respect for human dignity, the protection of the planet and the principles of shared responsibility.

With regard to funding, we insist on the adoption of concrete commitments so that the Sustainable Development Goals can serve as an effective catalyst for good public policies and practices that respect the unique reality of each country. Therefore, Angola wishes to reiterate that it will implement and interpret the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in full accordance with its national laws and development priorities, as well as the values and ethnic, cultural and religious beliefs of Angolan society and in line with internationally recognized human rights standards.

Despite the success in drafting the Agenda, it is important to note that there is still much work ahead. Several million people still live in extreme poverty or in conflict situations and are forced to migrate to other destinations. We also witness the daily growth of inequality and blatant human rights violations and the environmental degradation of our planet.

The discussions on financing for development in the context of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa earlier this year, were marked by the North-South divide, opposing donors and beneficiaries of international cooperation. It was possible, however, to reach a comprehensive policy framework for financing sustainable development, but the specific commitments for the effective implementation of the Agenda still lack concrete definition.

The global AIDS partnership will enable significant progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals and implementing the post-2015 development agenda. Despite the substantial differences that still persist, 193 countries have managed to reach an ambitious agreement on a new Agenda that includes the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner.

Let me conclude by stressing that the new Agenda implies a shared responsibility to build a better world economically, politically, socially and environmentally. For that reason, the Republic of Angola calls on the United Nations to play a central role in leading the global development policy.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Vice-President of the Republic of Angola for his statement.

Mr. Manuel Domingos Vicente, Vice-President of the Republic of Angola, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on the Minister for Housing, Territorial Planning and Environment of Uruguay.

Ms. De León (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are meeting on the occasion of a vitally important event, which is the culmination of three years of hard work and which will guide humankind to 2030 along a path of shared goals. We seek to achieve sustainable development while, above all, overcoming the major scourge of poverty and hunger. We have agreed to do this, thereby simultaneously addressing the right to a good quality of life for future generations and respecting the conditions imposed upon us by nature.

We are a small country. We cannot achieve much alone. Our reality is clearly marked by the larger forces of the market with its development models that we will never be able to achieve and that our own country cannot sustain. We must, therefore, change the direction of development. We must forge new, more humane and fairer models, which will undoubtedly be diverse, reflecting the diversity of the cultures and history that have shaped us as individual nations.

To achieve all of that, we turn to and place our trust in the United Nations. It is for that reason that we have all reached agreement under its auspices on the post-2015 development goals, so that the development that we seek to generate in every corner of the world will be sustainable and respectful of our cultures and of the best traditions of peace and coexistence.

The Sustainable Development Goals (resolution 70/1) are cross-cutting, universal, comprehensive and multidimensional. They offer a unique opportunity to the international community to make progress towards more just and inclusive societies that uphold the rights of individuals, with special attention paid to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable. That involves meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

We are facing a paradigm shift in agreeing on common objectives and goals, which, although they belong to each individual country, are nonetheless the responsibility of all. The eradication of poverty, universal access to health care, the prevention of disease, access to medicine, gender equality, universal access to education and the protection of the environment are crucial and require greater efforts and new commitments from all of us.

Uruguay is convinced that we can do a great deal to prevent the deaths of thousands of women and children. We consider it essential, therefore, to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health.

It is unacceptable that hunger still exists in the world, while tons of food are thrown away. That situation requires immediate action to change the patterns of production, consumption and trade. The Agenda that we have adopted provides an appropriate framework for that.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention the environmental challenges that extend beyond the borders of all of our countries. We welcome the inclusion of that issue in the post-2015 agenda. Without a healthy environment, there can be no viable effort for development.

Uruguay has already been affected by climate change. We have shared our concern and willingness to address that concern within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We feel that we must implement global actions in order to mitigate the effects of climate change, and we are already doing so in our own efforts to provide for the most affected, vulnerable and excluded sectors of society.

Nonetheless, it is our unwavering conviction that those who have contributed the most to climate change hold the greatest responsibility for remediating its effects and helping those suffering from those effects to adapt to the consequences. Furthermore, access to renewable energy, the conservation of biodiversity, the reversal of land degradation, the sustainable management of chemicals and related waste products, which mainly affect the most vulnerable populations, are also key issues that must be dealt with in order for sustainable development to be possible.

Uruguay has been a pioneer in recognizing the right to safe drinking water, which is enshrined in its Constitution, as well as the right to sanitation as a human right. We have vigorously defended those human rights, and we are pleased to see that universal and fair access to safe drinking water is a core Goal of the new post-2015 agenda. Efforts to improve water quality and the efficient and integrated use of water resources must be an essential component.

We cannot envision progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and targets without the active participation of the whole of society. The implementation of the post-2015 agenda requires us to work hard and as one, in order to overcome the challenges that face us. The task of changing existing models of development, which are driven by profit and consumerism, is the only way of reaching the goal that we have set out to achieve together. We would therefore like to share our contention that the post-2015 agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals can be fulfilled if we take them on as a whole, while recognizing the diversity of ways to achieve them. In short, we believe that we must dream big and set sail on the right course in order to achieve the happiness of all.

At this juncture, I would like to recall the words of our former President, José Pepe Mujica, who called upon us at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to remember that the fight for the environment is synonymous with the fight for human happiness. I would also like to share the words of our current President, Mr. Tabaré Vázquez, who, upon taking office, stated that, "Development must be sustainable, or it is not worthy of the name of development". It is that commitment that inspires us in Uruguay; that is the example that we, as a society, seek to forge.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan.

Mr. Ghandour (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to convey the greetings of the President of the Sudan, Omer Hassan A. Al-Bashir. I would also like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Sam Kutesa, the President of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and co-facilitators Ambassador Macharia Kamau and Ambassador David Donoghue for their wise leadership and tireless and sincere efforts during the negotiation process. Their stewardship has led us to this historic moment, when the entire world adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). I would also like to thank the delegations of all Member States, the representatives of civil society and of international organizations, who participated in the negotiations process in a commendable spirit of solidarity and responsibility.

Yesterday, at the advent of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, we took an important step with the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. While having wholeheartedly welcomed the adoption of this document and participated in all stages of the negotiations that led us there, we stress that my country, the Sudan, has already taken practical steps towards implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Different structural frameworks have already been put in place and integrated into national economic plans at both the federal and State levels. We will implement those plans through constructive partnerships with public and private sector agencies and all sectors of civil society organizations.

We look forward to the constructive role to be played by the United Nations and international community in supporting the implementation of those efforts. We would also stress that the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda must be carried out in full compliance with and respect for our national laws and avoid running counter to our religious, cultural and social values. In that regard, I would like to underline some important points, relating to the implementation of the Agenda.

First, the Sudan has made notable advances in achieving peace in all parts of the country. We continue and will continue to make positive efforts to that end, with the support of our friends, especially of those brothers and friends from the African Union and Qatar and Ethiopia. The call of the President of the Sudan for a fully inclusive and transparent national dialogue, without leaving anyone on the sidelines, was the culminating point of that process, as was his announcement of a pardon for militants willing to participate in that dialogue. We hope that the rebel movements will listen to the voice of reason and agree to participate in the call for dialogue.

Secondly, the unilateral sanctions and coercive measures, as well as the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on some developing countries, including the Sudan, constituted a high hurdle and a serious obstacle to any progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals such as the eradication of poverty, the provision of basic services to citizens, the increase of products and productivity, the opening of markets and the creation of new jobs. Those sanctions have adversely affected the fundamental rights of citizens, especially the poorest. In that regard, I am thinking, in particular, of the right to education, medical services and development. The consequences of those sanctions run counter to international law and the principles and purposes of the Charter of United Nations Charter. In collaboration with other developing countries, our delegation has worked for the inclusion of those principles in paragraph 30 of the Agenda.

Thirdly, the Sudan has met all the technical requirements, most notably those of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and those of the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative. Nevertheless, no progress has been seen as a result of the fulfilment of those obligations.

Fourthly, we stress the importance of building a global partnership on the means of implementation set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, especially for the least developed countries. That entails financial and non-financial resources, capacity building, the transfer of technology, creating a favourable international environment for the growth of national economies, facilitating the accession of developing countries and least developed countries to the World Trade Organization without obstacles or political preconditions, fulfilling official development assistance obligations, and giving special attention to the least developed countries through the promotion of international cooperation, tripartite cooperation and South-South cooperation. Having the means necessary for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will remain a challenge and a standard for all of us.

Fifthly, today our world faces unprecedented disparities, owing in part to inequality among and within nations, as well as global, economic and financial crises, the increasing demands for energy, the fluctuating price of energy, food insecurity, armed conflicts, migration, human trafficking, refugee issues, and the challenges caused by climate change. We therefore hope that the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Paris, will reach a comprehensive agreement that will take into account both the challenges and commitments related to the adaptation to and the mitigation and reduction of the adverse impacts of climate change and will result in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, in addition to a commitment by developed countries to contribute $100 billion to the Green Fund and to developing countries by 2020.

We hope that this Summit and the adoption of the Agenda will be a first step on the road to which we have committed ourselves towards justice, equality and prosperity. I would like to recall a saying of our ancestors: Poverty anywhere threatens prosperity everywhere. It is high time that the international community address those huge challenges and start where we left off in implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and African Integration of Chad.

Mr. Mahamat (Chad) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to commend the tireless efforts of Member States, which facilitated the drafting of the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development just adopted (resolution 70/1). The new Agenda builds on the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals. I also welcome the significant commitment on the part of the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General and his team, as well as the commendable contributions of specialized institutions, the private sector and civil society. I especially commend the commitment on the part of the international community, which has, through this Agenda, made the eradication of poverty its principal objective.

We must put global development back on track to serve people through reinforced international solidarity. In that light, we would like to highlight the commitments undertaken in the Agenda with respect to Africa.

As both a landlocked country and a member of the group of least developed countries, Chad calls for particular emphasis to be placed on implementing the priorities of those groups of States. My country, Chad — which like many others has been much affected by the volatility of the price of raw materials — underscores the importance of processing our own resources locally. We therefore call for greater investments and, above all, greater commitment so that we can exploit our resources on the basis of fairer contracts for producer countries and in conformity with national legislation.

In that light, we call for the establishment of transportation, energy, water, sanitary, health and agricultural infrastructure. In the field of sustainable energy, we welcome the commendable multilateral and bilateral initiatives, particularly those of the Secretary-General, on sustainable development for all. They include broadening the national component and enabling some of our countries to have our own renewable energy. That will contribute to reducing the effects of climate change and to adapting better to it. We also look forward with great interest to the implementation of the technology facilitation mechanism to be launched during this session.

It is necessary, especially for the least developed countries, that support be provided through an innovation fund that would allow us to establish the groundwork for technologies adapted to development. We must also ensure capacity-building so that we can resist external and climatic shocks. That will require supporting initiatives that we have agreed upon, particularly the completion of the Great Green Wall in the Sahel and the Sahara Initiative. That programme will promote reforestation and the reduction of soil erosion, as well as improving land management and combating desertification and pollution.

Such measures require protecting our natural heritage, such as Lake Chad, which is in danger of drying up. It is a vital water source for over 30 million people for agriculture, fishing and related activities. All the aforementioned initiatives and others will contribute to inclusive growth, job creation, the empowerment of the population — especially the most vulnerable, including women and children — and provide answers to the current migration crisis. They will also contribute to the implementation of the social compact, so that no one remains under the poverty line.

My country emphasizes the correlation between peace, security and development. We cannot consider development without bearing in mind the components of peace and security. Without them, the implementation of the new Agenda will be difficult, if not impossible. My delegation therefore reiterates that the universality of the 2030 Agenda cannot be realized without a commitment to the efficient implementation of all of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

We believe that this Agenda represents one of the most complete of its kind; its special nature lies in the dual reference to the means of implementations in Goal 17 and the intrinsic link established with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for funding development. Of course, mobilizing national resources is important in order to ensure countries' ownership of their own development. However, that will not be sufficient, and the international community must mobilize adequate financial and non-financial resources.

Chad will make every effort possible to make the Agenda part of our national development strategy, and we have taken steps to align our national programme, Chad Vision 2030, with the five-year plan for 2016 to 2020 and the 2030 Agenda. That will enable us to implement the appropriate follow-up and evaluation mechanisms.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cameroon.

Mr. Moukoko Mbonjo (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I am taking the floor on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, who would very much have liked to have participated in this special meeting, in which we have adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), but national obligations have required him to remain in Cameroon. He has asked me to deliver the following statement:

> "The Assembly at this session has just adopted the post-2015 development agenda as a follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). One year ago, Cameroon spoke categorically in support of a transformative agenda (see A/69/PV.11) that gives priority to the eradication of poverty and hunger, as well as to sustained and inclusive economic growth. We have cause for hope that the new Agenda, adopted during this session of the Assembly, is inspired by those priorities and will deliver on all of its promises.
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> "We must nonetheless ask ourselves why the outcomes and results of the activities undertaken in the previous development framework fell short of the Millennium Development Goals. Were we perhaps overly ambitious? Were the circumstances that we were facing perhaps adverse? Or did we perhaps lack the political will?
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> "Whatever the reasons, we must acknowledge that the hopes raised initially by the MDGs have been dashed to a certain extent. We should not let that rather unpleasant observation discourage us. On the contrary, it should motivate us to gather our energies and enthusiastically embrace the catchphrase of the 2030 Agenda 2030, namely, 'Transforming our world'. It is clear that through sustainable development that noble cause can be achieved. For it to succeed, the Agenda will have to fully embody the needs and hopes of the peoples concerned. To that end, Cameroon has worked tirelessly to implement a policy of social inclusion that aims to ensure that no one is left behind.
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> "On the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, at a time when the general feeling is that the Organization has carried out its mission well, it seems fitting to ask whether the time has come for the Organization to open a new chapter on action and activities on behalf of the international community. If the 2030 Agenda is, as I believe, 'an opportunity to usher in a new commitment to peace, security and human rights', I do not doubt for a instant that this new commitment will receive the support of almost all the Members of our Organization.
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> "A quick overview of the international situation would, in fact, show that the changes that have occurred in the world over the past several years, including power struggles as well as the great challenges of our time, actually require a new commitment on the part of the international community. We can, of course, take great pleasure from the nuclear agreement reached between the major Powers and Iran, the detente reached between the United States and Cuba, the new awareness of the dangers of global warming, and the better understanding of the demands of sustainable

development. Nevertheless, we still have every reason to remain concerned about the spread of terrorism, the inability to control migratory flows, and the ongoing instability of the global economy, which stems from the crisis of 2007-2008.

"Cameroon is a country that for decades was accustomed to peace and stability but has in recent years been confronted by insecurity caused by the unrest in the Central African Republic and the attacks by Boko Haram in the far north. Those attacks have disrupted our economic and social life and have created a climate of insecurity in the region, while provoking the flight of hundreds of thousands of refugees.

"It should be very clear that my country is only too willing to endorse a renewed commitment on the part of the United Nations to peace, security and human rights, which constitute, fortunately, the backbone of the new Sustainable Development Agenda. To its credit, the Agenda clearly and categorically states that it aims to ensure that no one will be left behind.

"In conclusion, I would say that in order to effectively achieve the Goals of the new Agenda, the United Nations must rise to the challenge of responding to and respecting ethical values. I made that same point here on 7 September 2000 (see A/55/PV.5). If globalization does not go hand in hand with a new moral order and if it lacks that spiritual element of solidarity among nations and peoples, it risks endangering peace, which is so dear to our people and era. Our world needs moral and ethical guidance, a set of moral values, which is essential to the human community in general. Only such an ethical approach will enable us to ensure that the individual remains at the crux of all our policies and actions.

"I would like to renew, here and now, Cameroon's proposal that we establish an international body on ethics, in the form of a committee or an observatory, responsible for promoting fundamental and universal human values among and within nations".

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on the Minister of International Development and Minister for la Francophonie of Canada.

Mr. Paradis (Canada): I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to offer Canada's perspective on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, just adopted (resolution 70/1). We congratulate the United Nations and the international community for their achievement. For the first time in human history, we have set ourselves the goal of not only reducing poverty, but eliminating it on a global scale.

(*spoke in French*)

To that end, we can lean on the considerable progress that we made in our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Today, the question is how we can implement the 2030 Agenda.

In 2010, Canada drew the world's attention to that important issue of maternal, newborn and child health by launching the Muskoka Initiative, in the framework of the Group of Eight Summit.

(*spoke in English*)

That effort met with overwhelming support, and we have seen significant progress in women's and children's health. Despite that progress, far too many women and children continue to die from preventable causes, and maternal, newborn and child health remains a vital piece of unfinished business left over from Millennium Development Goals. Canada welcomes the inclusion of maternal, newborn and child health as a pillar of the 2030 Agenda, as a means for ensuring that the world follow through on the commitments made in the Muskoka Initiative.

(*spoke in French*)

In and of itself, that represents an important challenge and can serve as a catalyst for other components of the 2030 Agenda. Clearly, maternal, newborn and child health is truly the basis of economic and social progress in many areas. For that reason, we welcome the publication this week of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, which reflects the international community's ongoing commitment. Official development assistance (ODA) is the central element of the global strategy to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

(*spoke in English*)

However, it is abundantly clear that ODA alone cannot finance the 2030 development agenda. Clearly, the international community must find new ways to blend financing from donors, foundations and the private sector. That is why Canada has been working with the World Economic Forum, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and other partners in redesigning the development finance initiative.

(*spoke in French*)

I was the chairman of the committee on that initiative, and I worked with our partners to find innovative solutions to finance the world's development needs. In the context of that initiative, Canada has supported the creation of new platforms that will enable us to share our knowledge, facilitate twinning and create partnerships in blended finance.

(*spoke in English*)

And in Addis Ababa, we launched the Global Financing Facility in Support of Every Woman, Every Child. That new approach to financing will bring in the private sector as we identify and promote innovative initiatives in maternal, newborn and child health. The additional investment generated through the Facility and other innovative financing mechanisms will set the course for moving from the current billions of dollars in development finance to the trillions required in the post-2015 agenda.

(*spoke in French*)

The constructive participation of civil society organizations in drawing up the 2030 Agenda was a fundamental contribution. Those entities will continue to play a major role in implementing the Agenda by working with Governments and local municipalities.

(*spoke in English*)

Finally, Canada's work in maternal, newborn and child health has taught us the importance of accountability. The Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health, co-chaired by Tanzania and Canada, has demonstrated that good data and regular follow-up lead to more impactful results. Our results are best when we set clearer indicators, monitor progress, identify gaps and adjust our approach.

Achieving the development Goals that lie before us will be challenging, but if we pursue innovative approaches such as blended finance; if we partner with all actors, including the private sector and civil society organizations; and if we establish constructive accountability mechanisms, we can deliver the ambitious and far-reaching Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on the Minister for Planning and International Cooperation of Jordan.

Mr. Fakhoury (Jordan): We are gathered here today to start a new global development phase, while reiterating our commitment to a renewed and more ambitious framework for development — the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core — charting a new course for development for the next 15 years. I am pleased to note that Jordan actively participated in all stages to reach the consensus on the post-2015 development agenda. And, today, as we declare our endorsement of the SDGs and our strong commitment to achieving them through an enhanced global partnership, we look forward to the new Agenda's building and expanding on the achievements and strengths of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The world today is a very different place than it was at the turn of the millennium. While prosperity is greater and more widespread, poverty remains a great challenge, especially in low- and middle-income countries, and while there has been growth, inequality has been rising, as have pressures on planetary resources. At the same time, hard-won development gains continue to be threatened by the effects of climate change and more frequent conflicts, as well as humanitarian and economic crises.

The SDGs are global, yet the challenges to achieving them are country-specific. Jordan's resilience and transformation and the role that it plays grew deliberately out of its strong commitment to sustainable development and comprehensive reform. Our reform approach has been based on an inclusive, sustainable and home-grown evolutionary process that is based on moderation, openness, stronger stakeholding and active citizenship, while empowering our citizens — especially women and young persons — and creating new opportunities in order to raise the standard of living throughout the country. It is our constitutional monarchy, our awareness of the importance of investing in our citizens, and our commitment to comprehensive reform and to the development of the country's and people's future that have enabled Jordan to become a unique safe haven in a turbulent region and to remain resilient, strong and able to transform challenges into opportunities.

I am pleased to report that as part of our continued commitment to comprehensive and home-grown reforms, Jordan is working on pursuing a path of sustainable development and on integrating the SDGs into its national development plans, while maximizing resource mobilization to meet its development agenda. The strong partnership between the public and private sectors and civil society has been a key factor in the success of the ongoing development efforts. This year, we launched a new 10-year socioeconomic blueprint for the country — Jordan 2025, a national vision and strategy aimed at achieving a prosperous, resilient and inclusive economy while deepening reform and inclusion.

On the political reform front, a new wave of laws that aim to further increase citizens' participation in decision-making covering political parties, municipal elections and decentralization has been endorsed by the parliament. Discussions on the new parliamentary elections law will start at the next ordinary session of Parliament. Additionally, as part of our efforts to enhance transparency, good governance and the fight against corruption, a royal national commission has adopted a national integrity charter and its action plan, which is being undertaken and tracked by this independent commission. Parliament is deliberating the creation of a new post of integrity ombudsman and an anti-corruption law, one of the key recommendations of that commission.

All of those reforms build on recent efforts that have seen the amendment of one third of our Constitution, the establishment of new democratic institutions — such as the Constitutional Court and the Independent Elections Commission — and the strengthening of our judiciary. On the economic reform side, Jordan adopted a new generation of economic laws to enhance investments, the business environment and competitiveness, such as the new public-private partnership law, the new tax law, the electronic transactions law and a new investment regulatory law.

Parliament is also deliberating on a new secured-lending law, and work is under way on a new bankruptcy and insolvency law. This year has also witnessed Jordan's successful completion of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) Stand-by Arrangement programme, and our country elected to start a new IMF Extended Fund Facility programme to continue structural reforms in 2016 and beyond.

On the development planning side, the Government of Jordan will use its national three-year executive development programmes, developed through a participatory approach, to implement the Jordan 2025 blueprint, whereby phase one will be part of the 2016-2018 programme. Our three-year national development framework includes development programmes for each governorate as part of our decentralization drive, based on a participatory bottom-up consultative approach to address the needs and regional disparities among governorates, depending on their competitive features, while targeting poverty and unemployment challenges.

The Government has internalized the SDGs as part of its Jordan 2025 plan and will build the yet-to-be developed indicators for tracking the progress of the SDGs into its development planning framework through the executive development programmes (EDPs). A delivery unit has been established in the Prime Minister's Office to monitor the implementation of Jordan 2025 and successive executive development programmes in order to further strengthen transparency and accountability. Moreover, a new public investment management framework was introduced for the implementation of the EDPs to enhance the efficiency of capital spending, prioritize public investments and maximize the use of public-private partnerships.

In pursuing our sustainable development model, Jordan is introducing green building codes, giving incentives for hybrid and electric vehicles — with cabinet members setting an example by using electric vehicles — and implementing a national energy diversification programme, led by a strong renewable energy component. Jordan also recently adopted national indicative climate-change targets ahead of the 2015 Paris Climate Conference. For the first time, we have also adopted a green-economy strategy and a strategy for solid waste management whose action plans will be implemented through successive development programmes.

Furthermore, this year Jordan will embark on implementing one of the world's most innovative sustainable development projects: the Red Sea-Dead Sea project, which will introduce water desalination for Jordan — the second poorest country in terms of water per capita availability — and will have regional beneficiaries and a water-swapping system, while using the resulting brine to save the Dead Sea. This unique venture is a critical sustainable development, environmental and peace project and is a humanitarian imperative, given the massive waves of refugees seeking a safe haven in Jordan.

Allow me to shed light on some of the emerging challenges that my region is facing. Turbulence in the region has generated a number of humanitarian crises and has dramatically increased human suffering and vulnerability. Such crises will be with us for some time, and their negative impact will continue to affect our region's sustainable development agenda for the next decade at a minimum. The solutions must be political and will have to be coupled with firm international commitments to mitigate and address the impact.

The Syrian crisis, which is now in its fifth year, has resulted in the flight of 4 million Syrian refugees to neighbouring countries, in addition to 8 million internally displaced persons. This crisis is unprecedented. It is not just a refugee issue but also a serious national resiliency issue, particularly for neighbouring countries, which together have been absorbing Syrian refugees There is also the spillover that has wrought havoc in the entire region and has also recently challenged the European continent in spite of the latter's size and wealth.

Jordan today is hosting over 1.4 million Syrians, only 8 per cent of whom are in refugee camps, making Jordan the world's third-largest refugee recipient country in per capita terms. That has heavily impacted the country's fiscal position since 2001. The overall estimated financial impact of the crisis, including direct and indirect costs, is estimated at about $6.6 billion. That figure excludes the cost of humanitarian and resiliency interventions and fails to account for the additional expenditures on education, health-care subsidies and income losses borne by the Government since the beginning of the crisis.

Given the situation, the Government is spearheading a resiliency-based response that brings together humanitarian and development efforts in a single national framework to benefit both refugee and host communities, namely, the Jordan Response Plan 2015 to the Syria Crisis, which was developed in cooperation with the international community and the United Nations system. Most of the $3 billion required for the plan for 2015 has not been forthcoming, despite the appeal that Jordan issued at the Third International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria, held in Kuwait last March. Only 35 per cent of the needed amount has been funded or pledged — the highest level so far — which indicates that for the fourth consecutive year at least two thirds of the needs remain unfunded.

Jordan has reached saturation level. It has nevertheless started to coordinate with United Nations organizations and donor countries to prepare the response plan for 2016-2018, which is to be launched by the end of this year.

The burdens faced by Jordan owing to regional turbulences have put great pressure on its limited resources and capabilities, affecting key sectors of the education, health and water systems, the municipal services and the infrastructure. In that regard, I would like to emphasize the significance of Jordan's efforts to support Syrian refugees and host communities and the importance of sustaining and expanding investment in support of Jordan's efforts. Doing so will contribute to the security and stability of our region, Europe and the world.

We should emphasize here that the spread of the effects of the crisis beyond the region would lead to a quadrupling of its financial and social costs, at a minimum. That quadrupling can be avoided and the costs can be limited if the necessary funding and support for national institutions and host communities is forthcoming and Jordan is treated as the first line of defence, not only for the region but for the whole world.

The flow of illegal immigrants that European countries, with their great economic and developmental capabilities, now face has demonstrated to everyone that Jordan has borne — and continues to bear for the fifth year running, despite the scarcity of its resources — an incredible burden, whose scale exceeds all expectations. This is testimony to Jordan's pivotal role. Some countries talk of hosting a limited number of refugees per year, while Jordan received the same number every one or two days during the peak of the flow of Syrian asylum seekers to Jordan.

The Syrian spillover that Jordan absorbed in just four years today constitutes 20 per cent of the Jordanian population. That is equivalent to the United States of America having to absorb 64 million immigrants; the European Union, 100 million; Germany, close to 17 million; Japan, 25 million; Russia, 54 million; China, 280 million; India, 254 million; Brazil, 40 million; or South Africa, around 11 million. For a country that imports 96 per cent of its energy and 87 per cent of its food, the scale of the influx has been devastating and has wreaked havoc with all the development gains that we have worked so hard to achieve.

As Jordan proceeds along this charted path of comprehensive reforms to achieve its SDGs, every means of supporting the countries that host refugees on behalf of the international community needs to be employed. As Jordan has already emphasized, there is a critical need to improve the eligibility criteria for vulnerable middle-income countries. That would enable Jordan, for example, to access the development assistance and the highly concessional and innovative funding tools that would help it to cope with the current unique destabilizing circumstances and manage its development agenda, particularly at a time when Jordanians continue to carry out a critical public service and provide a public good on behalf of the region and the world.

Donor countries should draw on their humanitarian and development resilience streams to ensure that the Jordan Response Plan 2015 for the Syria Crisis is fully funded, make increased commitments to resettle refugees in their countries, provide preferential concessional loans, debt swaps or debt relief ,and soften the terms and conditions for both existing and new loans by, for example, replacing short-term expensive debt with longer-term concessional debt.

The gap in the development financing needed by the developing countries as they implement the SDGs over the next 15 years poses a real challenge. Official development assistance (ODA) remains critical for both the low- and the middle-income countries, particularly the vulnerable middle-income countries. ODA and other flows need to catalyse and leverage all available sources of financing, which are desperately needed by vulnerable middle-income countries or countries in transition that are severely impacted by regional crises if they are to stay resilient and not put at risk their development gains and future prospects of meeting the new SDGs. Jordan is such a country. In that regard, we emphasize the importance of continuing and increasing ODA to 1 per cent of gross national income by 2020 in order to finance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for least developed countries and middle-income countries alike.

We should also explore additional sources of finance that could contribute to a new model of development financing to fulfil the ambitious promises of the SDGs. From this rostrum, I urge donors and international financial institutions to amend the qualification criteria of middle-income countries that are heavily impacted by regional crises, such as Jordan, so that they can gain access to innovative and easy financing tools. In that way, such countries could retain their flexibility and avoid putting at risk their development gains and medium-term prospects of meeting the SDGs. Once again I say that Jordan should not be penalized for becoming an upper-middle-income country while it is continuing to carry out a critical public service and provide a public good on behalf of the international community.

The gap in development financing to meet the investment needs of implementing the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs will require a more coordinated partnership from national Governments, donors, multilateral institutions, the private sector and civil society organizations to collectively work to, first, tap into traditional and non-traditional sources of finance, including ODA, public-private partnerships, financing by public-private partnerships, and Islamic financing, as well as subnational, national and global finance, to support the long-term investments needed for the new sustainable development agenda. Second, such a partnership must leverage and catalyse private capital and expand the use of tools to mitigate risk and uncertainty in order to mobilize non-traditional private financing. Third, it should maximize available financial resources and use them to mobilize additional, lower-cost resources, mitigate risk, further reduce financing costs and attract co-financing from the private sector.

Fourth, that more coordinated partnership must engage, and provide incentives to, private finance through a supportive business regulatory environment and sound macroeconomic frameworks. That would require an open trade policy, an efficient and effective tax system, ease of doing business, a competitive investment climate conducive to entrepreneurship and innovation, competition and well-functioning labour markets. Fifth, it must reinforce and strengthen domestic resource mobilization, which will increase available public funds, in addition to increasing the quality and efficiency of public expenditures in order to maximize the development impact. Sixth, it should strengthen project-preparation capacities and provide access to credit enhancement and risk mitigation tools, in addition to co-investment platforms and blended finance and public-private partnerships.

Seventh, the partnership should support improvement of the business environment and further enhance access to finance and the promotion of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;. Finally, it should combine financing for development with stronger policy guidance, more effective technical assistance and enhanced capacity-building to help countries build economic resilience and meet their individual responsibilities for financing their development needs with a view to achieving the SDGs.

The current political, economic and social situation in the Middle East has brought about a number of sequential and cumulative humanitarian crises that have dramatically increased human suffering and fragility. Those crises will take time to be resolved, and their negative impact will continue to affect sustainable development programmes in the region for the next decade at least. Nevertheless, the Arab region is committed to the success of the region's transition from the MDGs to the global objectives of the 2030 Agenda. As a region, we also confirm our strong commitment to contributing to the achievement and means of implementation, including financing, capacity-building and technology transfer of sustainable development, across the region, as well as future steps.

Our development agenda is about shared prosperity. Hence the burden-sharing cannot continue to be disproportionate. This is a defining moment in human history. Jordan counts on the courage, wisdom, commitment and human fraternity of the international community not to let us down but rather to treat the achievement of the SDGs not as an investment or business as usual, but with the sense of urgency it warrants for the sake of leaving no one behind.

That is especially the case for countries such as Jordan that, through no fault of their own, have become vulnerable for doing the right and moral thing. The world can continue to count on Jordan remaining a resilient safe haven, an oasis of stability and an indispensable global partner in peacemaking and peacekeeping, in interfaith and intrafaith dialogue and in the fight against extremism and terrorism, as well as on its providing a model of inclusive, sustainable, evolutionary and comprehensive reform and development.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar.

Mr. Lwin (Myanmar): It is a great honour and privilege to take part in this historic Summit. At this auspicious gathering, we are taking a bold step by embarking on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), after bringing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to a close. The important resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", will guide us in our development efforts over the coming 15 years.

Since it is a historic achievement of multilateralism, may I congratulate Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Mr. Sam Kutesa, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, on their leadership, as well as all Member States and all stakeholders for their contributions throughout the process.

We all agree that significant progress in implementing the MDGs has been achieved in most countries in varying degrees, although many challenges remain to be addressed, especially for the least developed countries (LDCs). My own country, Myanmar, has made notable gains, particularly in poverty and hunger reduction, literacy and basic education, eliminating gender disparity in primary, secondary and tertiary education, reducing the child mortality rate, improving maternal health and developing a global partnership for development.

In the area of combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, Myanmar is among the few countries in the world where the incidence rate of HIV infection among adults has decreased by over 50 per cent over the first decade, and we are making significant and durable progress in our fight against malaria. The Government wants to enhance the investments made in education, health, water and sanitation systems and in employment creation, among others. Accordingly, it has increased the annual budget allocations for those sectors.

Like other developing countries, Myanmar attached priority to meeting the MDGs, and we therefore put our utmost efforts into overcoming the challenges to fulfilling the MDGs. We shall do the same when, in collaboration with the United Nations and other international partners, we address future challenges. In the implementation of the SDGs, it is important to recognize national circumstances, different levels of development and the needs of countries in special situations, including LDCs. One of the lessons learned from the implementation of the MDGs is that the means of implementation are crucial for the effective and timely implementation of the SDGs. Only with the full and effective implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda can the 2030 Agenda be achieved within the framework of a revitalized and strengthened global partnership.

Over the past five years, Myanmar has been engaged in a series of reform measures in the political, economic, social and administrative spheres and in private-sector development. Currently we are implementing our 20-year National Comprehensive Development Plan (2011-2030). In line with the people-centred approach, Myanmar will redouble its efforts to achieve sustainable development by mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in its national development agenda and will work closely with its development partners.

In that regard, my delegation wishes to emphasize that the Agenda must be implemented in a manner consistent with its national policy, legislation and development priorities. Furthermore, my delegation would also like to highlight that financial and technical assistance for the developing countries is crucial in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in a timely manner. I am confident that a genuine partnership by all with their selective responsibilities will bring greater well-being, prosperity, peace and justice to a healthier planet by 2030. For its part, Myanmar pledges to join the international community's efforts to bring peace and prosperity for the people and the planet through an enhanced partnership.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Madagascar.

Mrs. Atallah (Madagascar) *(spoke in French)*: It is a great pleasure to attend this historic meeting to celebrate the birth of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to speak on behalf of Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina Rakotoarimanana, President of the Republic of Madagascar. By endorsing together all the major common challenges of the post-2015 development agenda, we are giving humankind new cause for hope. Today is therefore a red-letter day, all the more so because it is imbued with the solemn nature of our deliberate choice. We, as the representatives of the peoples of the United Nations, have elected to make progress with dignity towards our common development goals without leaving anyone behind.

Enshrining the principles of universality and solidarity, the SDGs and their outcomes, whatever they may be, will transcend the specific borders of our countries, bringing us genuinely together as nations. With the advent of the SDGs, we enter a new era rich with possibilities. Their achievement will translate to a qualitative advance towards greater well-being and development for our peoples.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to express my sincere congratulations and thanks to all those, near and far, who contributed to the drafting of the new, transformative agenda. I would like to pay particular tribute to those in the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals, to the Secretary-General and his team, to Ambassadors Macharia Kamau of Kenya and David Donoghue of Ireland and all other delegates for their highly relevant work.

Yesterday, the Holy Father — whom I wish to thank for taking the time to address us (see A/70/PV.3) — challenged us on the governance of this world, for which we are responsible. Let us look on the message he shared with us as a blessing that is capable of changing our policies, our habits and our mindsets over the next 15 years.

The post-2015 agenda serves as a blueprint for development. Madagascar has chosen to view it as a multilateral contract. In that regard, rest assured that we will assume our commitments and responsibilities. The vision of peace, prosperity and partnership described in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and renewed on behalf of all people and the planet, corresponds with the approach adopted by my country in its national development plan, which envisages a modern and prosperous Madagascar harnessing its human and natural capital.

Despite that, achieving the Goals we have set for ourselves will require support measures. The recent third International Conference on Financing for Development points the way; we must use our own domestic resources and increase official development assistance. We need to strengthen our productive capacities in order to create added value for the products we produce. We also need to industrialize our economy. I am sure, therefore, that those present will agree with me that the design of a technology facilitation mechanism, as envisaged by the 2030 Agenda to support the work of achieving the SDGs, is extremely pertinent and timely.

At present, the international context has seen major shifts and is in perpetual flux. The need for peace, development and security is more pressing than ever.

The deep-rooted impacts of modern crises, the pockets and areas of international tension and the recurrent issues related to climate change and food, energy and maritime security are also major constraints that threaten stability and growth.

But 2015 is a year of promise. This year will mark a clear turning point in the actions we engage in for development. With the adoption of the SDGs and with the outcome of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, new possibilities are opening up before us. We are putting in place anti-poverty mechanisms and measures to benefit men, women and children. We are responsible for ensuring a better tomorrow for our populations by providing them with access to education, health, justice and security. Those are fundamental needs, yet they cannot be satisfied because of war, conflicts and natural disasters. We must together work to transform the future of our peoples.

Our solidarity will be strengthened by a global win-win partnership, because we have entered into shared commitments. With regard to contemporary challenges, by working together we should be able to do away with poverty and ensure that we have the means in place to provide adequate protection and security for our peoples. Given the challenge, Madagascar is working hard to mobilize all its own resources, whether financial, human or material, in readiness to set out along the path of development.

As I am sure everyone is well aware, recurring climate threats, the ravages and depredations of locusts and sociopolitical crises have added to the vulnerability of Madagascar. Nonetheless, with the support of the international community, we are confident that we can overcome those challenges and stabilize the country in a sustainable way by encouraging institutions and people to assume their responsibilities. After all, democracy is the guarantor of sustainable economic growth.

I would like to conclude by quoting from the Agenda we have just adopted an excerpt that I particularly value: "As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind". I would add that nobody should be marginalized or thrown overboard during the journey.

The countdown to the achievement of the SDGs has already begun. I therefore would like to express the hope that 2030 will be, at the latest, the year in which we deliver on those Goals. In that year, may our sons and daughters enjoy with pride the fruit of the transformation that we have spoken about today. We dare to hope that the international community can display yet greater political consensus, increase its investments and aid for development and undertake effective action that will facilitate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.